The Aboriginal Rock Paintings of the Churchill River

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The Aboriginal Rock Paintings of the Churchill River

by

Tim Edward Hodgson Jones

Anthropological Series Editor
Ian G. Dyck

Saskatchewan Department of Culture and Youth
Regina, 1981

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Foreword

About the Series

The Anthropological Series is an outlet for original research on the human occupation of Saskatchewan. The studies emphasize prehistory and early history of the province, an extensive and complex subject. This emphasis corresponds to the research interests of the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, whose responsibilities are provincial in scope and cover the period beginning with first human occupation some 11,000 years ago and ending with the advent of large scale agricultural settlement about 1880 A.D. Our series will accommodate technical papers by museum staff, research associates and any others whose work relates to museum interests and is of professional quality.

About the Author

Tim Jones is a freelance archaeological consultant living in Dalmeny, Saskatchewan. He has studied at the University of Saskatchewan earning a B.A. in Biology in 1964 and an M.A. in Anthropology in 1974. His specialty is rock art studies which has involved him in considerable field work both in Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba. Tim is a founding member of the Canadian Rock Art Research Associates and is Communications Associate and editor of their **CRARA Newsletter.** Recently he has done extensive research for the Saskatchewan Department of Culture and Youth on archaeological resource management. He is presently serving as education officer for the Saskatchewan Archaeological Society.

About the Book

Some 60 or 70 aboriginal rock painting sites are known in Saskatchewan north of the 55th parallel and perhaps two dozen more occur in northern Manitoba. The Churchill River, a major historic waterway, spans this northern area and possesses an important series of rock art sites. Rock art is a special kind of archaeological remain which was left intentionally as an interpretation of some aspects of prehistoric and early historic life by persons who lived it. Although many of the paintings have survived, much of their meaning has been lost. In this book Tim Jones examines the Churchill River paintings and finds some answers and some reasonable guesses to the questions: Who painted them? Why? and How long ago?

Ian G. Dyck
Supervisor of Archaeological Research
Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Study

This study is an examination of the aboriginal rock paintings of the Churchill River of northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba. It incorporates a description of the symbols at all known sites along the river, and is the first systematic attempt to determine the age, cultural affiliation and interpretation of the rock paintings of this part of the Canadian Shield. The paintings are discussed in the context of their place in the Canadian Shield rock art style, of which they are a northwestern manifestation.

The rock art sites in this geographical area are important because: (1) They constitute some of the most northwesterly occurrences of the Canadian Shield rock art style — the area is therefore a peripheral zone for this cultural trait; (2) The Churchill River is a major travel route today as in the past when it was the water highway from Hudson Bay to the Northwest — no systematic study of the rock art of such a watercourse in the Canadian Shield had been undertaken previous to this one; (3) Many Churchill River rock art sites have more paintings than do sites in nearby adjacent areas; (4) Increasing visitation and vandalism coupled with the threat of two major power projects (one underway in Manitoba, the other yet tentative in Saskatchewan*) endanger a number of sites. (Churchill River Basin Group 1973; Dickson 1972). Given these circumstances it is important that some permanent record of the sites be preserved.

Terminology

The term *rock art* refers to drawings or figures on rock surfaces created in one of two ways (or rarely, by a combination of both): pigment may be applied to the surface of the rock, or part of the rock may be removed by pecking, scratching, grinding or incising. Rock art thus refers to two-dimensional depictions on vertical or horizontal rock surfaces. In many areas unusual natural configurations such as protrusions, hollows and cracks were incorporated as integral features of the artist's drawings, but in the rock art of the Canadian Shield this practice was virtually nonexistent.

Rock art which involves paintings has sometimes been called *pictographic*. Many scholars simply call it *rock painting*, because *pictograph* also refers to drawings done on various media other than rock, like animal skins, wood and bone. *Rock engraving* is often used outside North America to refer to art involving removal of part of a rock face to make figures, but *petroglyph* is used by North Americans for the same phenomena. *Rock carving* is commonly used as an alternative to

*The Churchill River Board of Inquiry issued its report on the proposed project in June, 1978, recommending that the project not proceed (Churchill River Board of Inquiry Report 1978). In September, 1978, the Government of Saskatchewan announced that the Wintego Power Dam on the Churchill River would not be built due to largely negative impacts it would have on the local environment and people.

rock engraving and to petroglyph. Following well established North American usage, I will use the terms *rock painting* and *pictograph* interchangeably in this study, both referring to symbols *painted* on vertical rock faces.

The rock art of the Churchill River belongs to the class called *rupestral* or *parietal art* by European scholars, distinguishing it from *portable art*. Parietal art occurs on immovable rock surfaces, while portable art is that found on small stones or utilitarian objects made of stone or any other materials which can easily be carried or moved about.

At the first meeting of the Canadian Rock Art Research Associates in Thunder Bay, Ontario, December, 1969, a session was held dealing with terminology as applied to rock art sites in Canada. Regarding individual paintings, various terms were suggested, such as *design element, figure, element, motif, pictograph,* and *painting*. For the sake of making a narrative more creative or varied, it was proposed that any of the terms be used interchangeably, as long as the meaning was clear (Dawson & Taylor 1971: 13-14). This is the practice followed here.

The Importance of Rock Art

All art involves a selection from life experiences of the artist and a symbolization of this in a manifest form, such as a song, painting, dance, or some other artifact. Where strong social or religious strictures are placed on the behaviour and beliefs of the artist we may see rigid, highly stylized productions which are immediately identifiable as belonging to his group and none other. Where there are few cultural dicta, each work may be totally unique, and the cultural group from which the artist comes may not be apparent. Most commonly, art in a certain medium in a particular region bears many internal similarities. The most important questions then to be asked are: what ethnic group or groups made the art; when was it done; how long did the tradition last; and why was art created at all?

World literature on rock art provides abundant evidence that almost all rock art contains cultural meaning. Even in the case of *doodling* (Leechman et al 1955:39), it is useful to ask why certain symbols were made and not others, and why particular cultural groups or individuals chose those particular visualizations. Ritter and Ritter (1976:138) contend that a large portion of the petroglyph and pictograph sites in western North America have "medical" significance (using the concept in both its aboriginal and modern senses). Thus, interpretation of rock art, if done in a careful and logical manner, promises information about non-material aspects of prehistoric people's lives. Even if we gain only a little secure insight into the reasons why paintings were made along the lake and river shores of the Canadian Shield, we will achieve a broader perspective on how man has related to his diverse physical and social environments.

Physical and Social Characteristics of the Study Area

The study area lies within the Precambrian (often called Canadian) Shield of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. It is comprised almost entirely of Precambrian rocks, an ancient formation which extends in a great arc from the northwestern shores of the Arctic Ocean. down past the Great Lakes, up into Labrador and the Eastern Arctic Archipelago. The Canadian Shield physiographic province (see Fig. 1) encompasses about 4,277,000 square km or about half of the total Canadian land mass (Moore 1933:21).

Figure 1 Map of Canada showing the extent of the Canadian Shield.

The last retreat of the continental glaciers, between 10,000 and 7,000 years ago (Robinson 1969:38-39), modified the topography of previous geologic times, scouring away soil and weathering rocks, smoothing off hills, filling the valleys with debris, and disorganizing the glacial drainage.

This created a "multitude of lakes, which spill at random across the lowest points in the rims . . . . The accidental irregularities of the ground determine the courses of the streams draining these lakes, with the result that they are a succession of quiet, lake-like stretches connected by rapids or falls." (Cooke 1947:11,14). This last phrase is an apt description of the Churchill River. The landscape today is much the same as the end of the glacial period left it: exposed crystalline bedrock, upon which is found a thin cover of soil, muskegs, marshes, lakes and streams (see Appendix I for details about climate, plants and animals).

In northwestern Manitoba and northern Saskatchewan the high hills average 400 to 500 m above sea level, major relief seldom reaching more than 150 m above the surrounding terrain (Robinson 1969:12). Speaking of the Black Bear Island Lake area, the western-most portion of the rock painting study area, Money (1965:5) says, "The area is one of low to moderate relief with few ridges and hills reaching more than 200 feet [60 m] above the level of the nearest large lake. Maximum local relief is probably approximately 350 feet [100 m.]" This characterization is roughly applicable to the rest of the study area as well. From the air, the most striking elements of the landscape are the bedrock, evergreen forest and water expanses (see Plate 1). Everywhere the waterways and thickly-forested mainland dominate the topography. Rock exposures, at times from 1 to 30 m or more in height, outcrop along the shores of lakes and streams. It is such rock "canvases" that were utilized by aboriginal artists for rock paintings (see Plate 2).

The Churchill River is a major physiographic feature in the northwestern Canadian Shield, beginning outside the Shield and crossing it on its way to the ocean at Hudson Bay. The river is approximately 1600 km long (Robinson 1969:64). The Churchill River basin drains 298,000 square km of northern Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and extends over six degrees of latitude (53° to 59° N) and 19 degrees of longitude (94° to 113° W) (Churchill River Basin Task Force 1972:5). The western-most rock painting site on the river, on Pinehouse Lake, is approximately 605 km upstream from the eastern-most sites, on Opachuanau Lake. Proceeding downstream from the first site, one drops about 136 m in vertical distance by the time the last site is reached, and one has encountered over 50 sets of rapids and waterfalls, some of which can be run in a canoe while others must be portaged around.

Figure 2 shows the locations of communities whose residents use the Churchill River for commercial and household fishing, hunting and trapping, and for travel. The most comprehensive study on the people and the area is an account of a 1939 canoe trip from Pelican Narrows through Reindeer Lake and into the Northwest Territories, written by P. G. Downes, a Boston school teacher. In his book, *Sleeping Island*, Downes deals with the geography, history and present people in this part of the north, discussing traditional aspects of the Cree people's life, and that of the Chipewyans further north, and describing the processes of culture change then occurring. Recently, some social and economic data

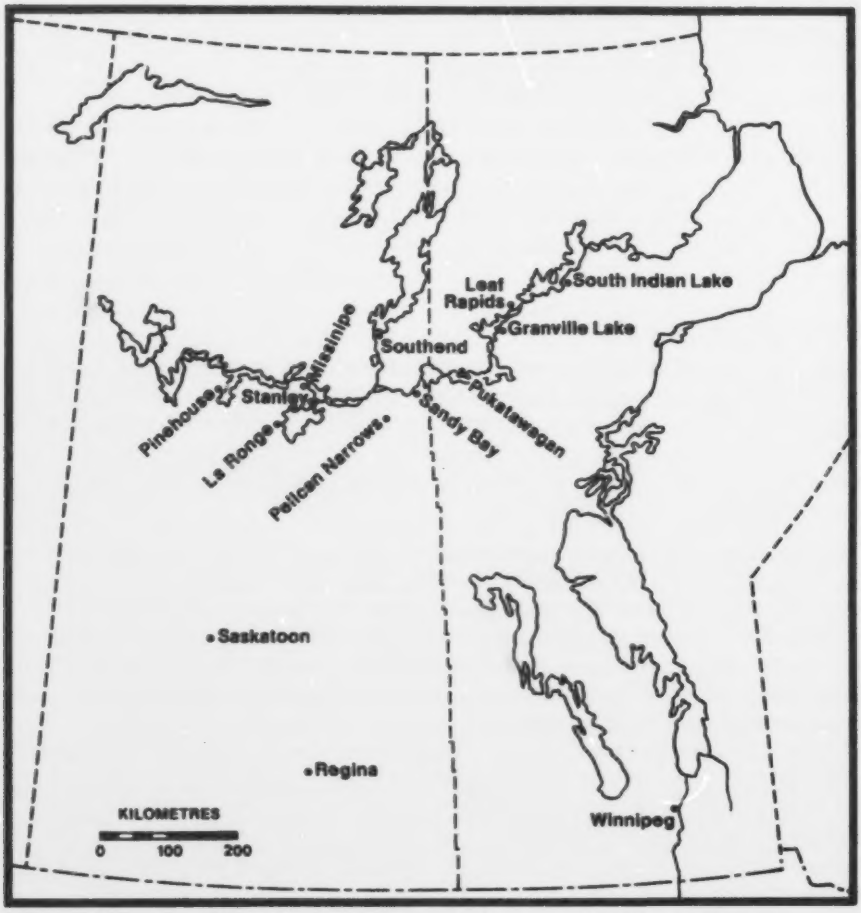


Figure 2 Map showing communities along the Churchill River.

have been produced by the Churchill River Study, a two-year environmental impact study relating to possible hydroelectric development at Wintego Rapids (see Collinson et al 1975; Stabler et al 1975; Churchill River Study 1976). As well, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians has published a detailed analysis of the past and present economy of the Saskatchewan part of the Churchill River basin in the region of the proposed Wintego development (Federation of Saskatchewan Indians 1976).

Reliable figures for the population of each of the communities are difficult to obtain, although an attempt was made by the Institute for Northern Studies (1972) to enumerate the Saskatchewan settlements: (1) Pelican Narrows — 810 people (1971 census); (2) Southend — 275 (Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources estimate); (3) Sandy Bay — 494 (census); (4) Stanley — 916 (D.N.R. estimate); (5)

Pinehouse — 427 (census); and (6) La Ronge — 3513 (census and estimate, including neighbouring reserves). Except for La Ronge, where there is a large Euro-Canadian population, the majority group in each community is Cree Indian, speaking either Plains Cree or Wood or "Rocky" Cree (see Wolfart 1973:38). In Manitoba, there are about 1000 people at Pukatawagan, more than 600 at South Indian Lake, and around 125 at Granville Lake. All of these estimates are probably considerably lower than today's population figures. For example, Sandy Bay had 745 people in March 1979 (Environmental Assessment Secretariat, Saskatchewan Government).

Research Done for this Study

This study is based on summer field studies in 1965, 1966, 1967 and 1969, during which times I personally recorded twenty of the twenty-two sites. The twenty-first site, near Wintego Rapids, was recorded in 1974 and the twenty-second, on McDonald Bay, in 1980 by David Meyer. I have not visited the last two sites, but Meyer has made his records on them available for inclusion here.

Published sources specifically relating to Churchill River rock art sites are few and vary from relatively complete site descriptions, to brief reports of sites, to simple drawings or photographs (see Appendix II). I obtained some ethnographic information relevant to rock art from Indian residents of northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba during various field trips since 1965. The study also incorporates information from early explorers and geologists, and unpublished ethnographic information obtained by other observers from present-day native informants. I also draw on my field records for fifty additional pictograph sites in northern Saskatchewan, Manitoba and northwestern Ontario, and on comparisons between this body of information and that derived from my visits to rock art sites in France, Spain, Finland, the American Southwest, Alberta and British Columbia.

Methods of Study

Making records of pictographs in a wilderness or hinterland region such as the Churchill River presents certain problems. The first is discovering where the sites are located and the second is reaching them. Both problems created difficulties in the early stages of this research.

Locating the Sites

Almost all site locations obtained to date are from local native informants (see Plate 3), who know the country intimately. It should be noted that locating known sites in this and other areas without the assistance of local people would have been impossible. Before entering the field I also sent several hundred form letters soliciting information from members of the Saskatchewan Archaeological Society, Hudson's Bay Company stores in the north, tourist camp operators, and weekly newspapers. One or two previously unreported sites were located in this way, and contacts were made with several people who provided other types of assistance.

One thing I learned early was that some apparently reliable site reports proved to be non-existent. After a few "wild goose chases", I found it essential to determine several key facts at the beginning, specifically, whether the informant had actually seen the paintings, what the subject matter was, if the paintings were done in red, and what the precise location was. The sites described here are all that are definitely known to me, but there is a possibility that others will be located on the river in the future. For example, reports have been received of two possible sites near the recorded Island Portage and Mountain Lake Peninsula sites.

Getting to the Sites

All sites in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba must be reached from the water. Sites at the mouth of the Foster River and on Black Bear Island Lake were reached by flying a canoe and other equipment into Pinehouse settlement by pontoon-equipped airplane, then canoeing downstream. All other sites were reached by motorized canoe, from Missinipe, Jan Lake, Tyrrell Lake or Leaf Rapids. Logistics are therefore a major problem, but one which can be overcome with wilderness experience, or by placing oneself in the hands of a competent native guide. Topographical maps produced by the Canada Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, Surveys and Mapping Branch with a scale of one inch equalling four miles (1:253,440) were used during travel to all sites save those on Opachuanau Lake.

Graphic Recording and Reproduction Techniques

Of all the information it is possible to record, accurate reproduction of the symbols is the single most important feature. Future pictograph researchers may be able to measure the rock faces where paintings were once found, the compass direction of such faces and so forth, but the content of the symbols was the most important thing to the artist and therefore, the art historian or anthropologist must first and foremost

record the drawings as accurately as possible. Unfortunately, faithful reproductions of Shield rock drawings have often not been available. Some sites have never been recorded and some published reproductions are inaccurate or misleading. One documented example involves three separate sets of drawings, by three different writers, of paintings at the important Tramping Lake site, Manitoba. Each set of drawings differs in its depiction of the symbols and each contains some inaccuracies (Jones 1970).

In the present study special emphasis was placed on development of inexpensive techniques for accurately recording and reproducing the symbols (Jones 1970; Pohorecky & Jones 1966, 1967a). For field records, tracings were made with transparent film material (either *Saran Wrap* or *Look*!) and marking pens. Masking tape was used to fasten the film to the rock face, first at the corners and then elsewhere along the edges. Where painted areas were larger than a single sheet of overlay, additional pieces were attached to the first overlay with strips of transparent tape.

A fine felt or fibre-tipped marking pen with indelible ink was used to trace the figures. Care was taken to ensure that the outer edges on the tracings corresponded exactly with the outer edges of the paintings. Red pens were used for paintings, while blue was usually used to delineate lichen or moss growths, and black for cracks, chips or other features in the rock face. Notations about special features were made on the margins of the tracing (see Plates 4, 13 & 15). A measurement from any arbitrary point marked on the tracing to water level was recorded either in a note-book or on the tracing itself. Another essential item, orientation of paintings with respect to the water surface, was recorded by establishing a straight horizontal line on the tracing with a string and a line level.

The best lighting for tracing and photography occurs when the sky is overcast. If there is a great deal of glare off the water or from light-coloured clothing the recorder can eliminate some of it by holding a dark object between the glare source and the tracing. Black and white film is of very limited use in recording Shield rock paintings, because there is usually little contrast between the paintings and the rock backgrounds. Both come out as shades of grey on black and white film. Consequently, black and white was used only for outcrops, cliffs, and the general physical setting, but colour film was used for photographic records of the paintings themselves. As some understanding of the setting and general environment of each site is important, an attempt was made to take a sequence of photographs which would show this. A picture showing the appearance of the rock exposures from a distance was taken, then one from the medium distance, then one of the particular cliff or rock exposure where the paintings appear, then separate groups of paintings on individual rock faces, then close-ups of individual pictographs (see Plate 5).

My efforts to record rock paintings as accurately as possible also resulted in the development of a new technique for reproduction of symbols (Jones 1970:111-14). Briefly, the method is as follows. A field tracing is placed on a light-table and taped down with masking tape. A large sheet of paper suitable for a stencil is taped over the tracing, and the pictograph outlines are traced on it in pencil. A horizontal axis is drawn on the stencil paper, using the two points recorded on the tracing for that purpose. The marked stencil paper is then cut out with a fine-point stencil knife.

A piece of paper to be inked with the reproduction is then taped to a table, and the cut stencil is taped over top. The horizontal axis marked on the stencil must be aligned parallel to the top and bottom edges of the paper about to be inked. The inking tool is a small shoe-brush with a circular clump of bristles at one end. The brush is tapped onto a pad containing fast-drying ink, then tapped lightly onto the paper through the stencil. The amount of ink transferred can be controlled with a little practice, and various degrees of fading can be indicated by transferring more or less ink to the corresponding parts of the reproduced symbol. Full-sized reproductions can be photographed and reduced to any desired size for mechanical reproduction. All of the reproductions herein have been made in this manner.

Site Data

Site Locations

Figure 3 shows the locations of recorded pictograph sites along the Churchill River. For the purposes of this study, the sites are numbered serially from one to twenty-two, proceeding from west to east. All sites have been given names as well. Where geographical features serve to identify the location, such names have been assigned to sites (e.g. Maple Leaf Rapids site). The names for the Opachuanau Lake sites are those already used by Steinbring et al (1978). Table 1 gives the name and the Borden number assigned each site, the Borden number being the official site number assigned to all registered archaeological sites in Canada (Borden 1952). The numbers listed here were assigned by the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History in Regina and are on file there.

Table 1
Names and Borden Numbers for Rock Art Sites along the Churchill River

Site	Borden Number	Name
1	GkNo-5	McDonald Bay
2	GkNl-2	Kinosaskaw Lake
3	GkNk-1	Foster River Mouth
4	GkNl-1	Silent Rapids
5	GjNk-3	Wamninuta Island
6	GjNk-2	High Rock Narrows 1
7	GjNk-1	High Rock Narrows 2
8	GjNd-2	Rattler Creek
9	GjNd-1	Cow Narrows
10	GiNd-3	Mountain Lake Peninsula 1
11	GiNd-2	Mountain Lake Peninsula 2
12	GiNd-1	Neyo Onikup Bay
13	GiNc-4	Stanley Rapids
14	GiNa-1	Island Portage
15	GiMu-11	Uskik Lake
16	GjMt-5	Conjuring River Mouth
17	GjMr-3	Wintego Rapids
18	GjMn-2	Wasawakasik Lake
19	GjMn-1	Maple Leaf Rapids
20	HdLx-12	Oil Drum
21	HdLx-11	Face
22	HdLx-10	Caribou Nest

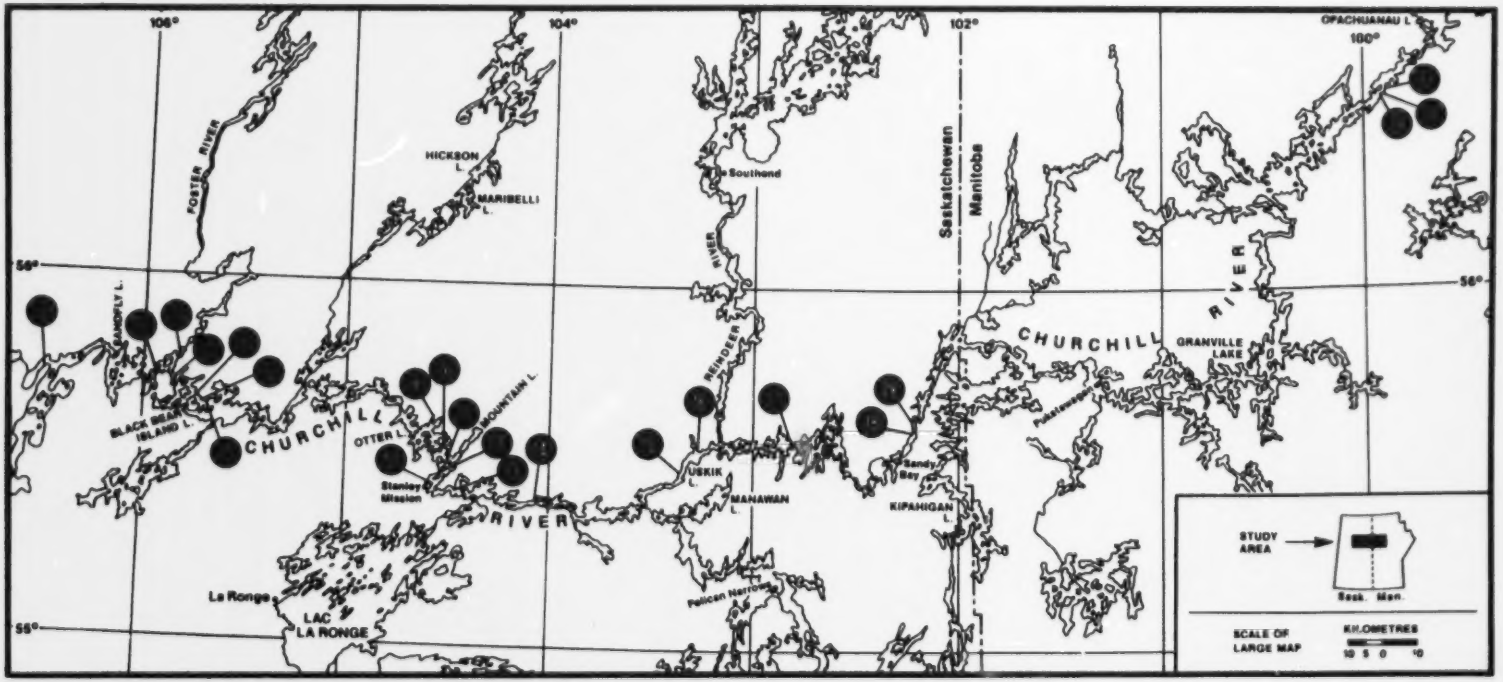


Figure 3 Map showing rock art sites on the Churchill River.

Site Descriptions

The descriptions of the rock art sites herein consist of two parts: verbal descriptions of sites, and scaled reproductions of the paintings. The descriptive sections include brief notes on physical settings, the degree of painting exposure to erosional factors, orientation of the rock face, presence or absence of lichen or other vegetal encroachment or patination, presence or absence of natural or human damage, height of the paintings above water, and any other noteworthy characteristics.

When a description of painting position is given, the viewpoint is that of the observer as he looks at the rock face. The compass bearings for each rock face refer to the direction that a viewer would face if he somehow were inside the rock and looking out at 90 degrees from the strike. This reading is the angle the painted rock surface presents to the sun, rain, waves and ice, all of which affect the preservation of paintings.

Latin names are given for a number of lichens in the site descriptions. These were provided by Professor John Sheard, Department of Biology, University of Saskatchewan, upon examination of colour transparencies taken by the author. Lichens present certain taxonomic problems, some positive identifications requiring (for example) chemical tests of lichen thalli. Consequently, the scientific names herein must be regarded as tentative.

Roman numerals, designating separate rock faces with paintings, proceed from left to right as one looks at the cliffs from the water. The capitalized word "Face" refers to a single rock plane bearing one or more paintings.

1. McDonald Bay Site

Location: 55° 44' N. Lat., 106°28' W. Long. On the east shore of McDonald Bay, Pinehouse Lake, about 2-3 km south of the channel opening to the main body of the Lake.

Recorded: July 4, 1980 by David Meyer.

Paintings: There are seven and possibly eight separate figures (see Fig. 4; the reproduction given here was made from colour slides made by David Meyer and Steve Blair. (While the exact boundaries of all the paintings are not certain because of the rough and iron-stained rock background, I am certain that the subject matter and the relationships of the figures to each other are accurate). Four of the figures are thunderbirds. The upper right one has a solidly-coloured body, and the lower right one has feathers depicted, at least on the left wing. At the centre of the group is some sort of mammal. A snake extends downward from the left to the upper left thunderbird, and below the snake is a more-or-less straight, upright line with three "prongs" at its lower end. Below the prongs of the "trident" figure is more pigment, and there is some suggestion that this could actually be part of the figure above it. However, since the pigment of the trident figure is quite clear and distinct

and the pigment below it is not, the latter is probably not part of the seventh figure. If it is part of it, the whole thing would look something like a stubby ship with a long mast and two sails. Such a subject is unlikely. The pigmentation of all the paintings seems to be a similar brown-red rust, although the differential staining of the rock face makes the colours of the figures appear somewhat different from each other. The rock is extensively stained by a brown-khaki rust patination.

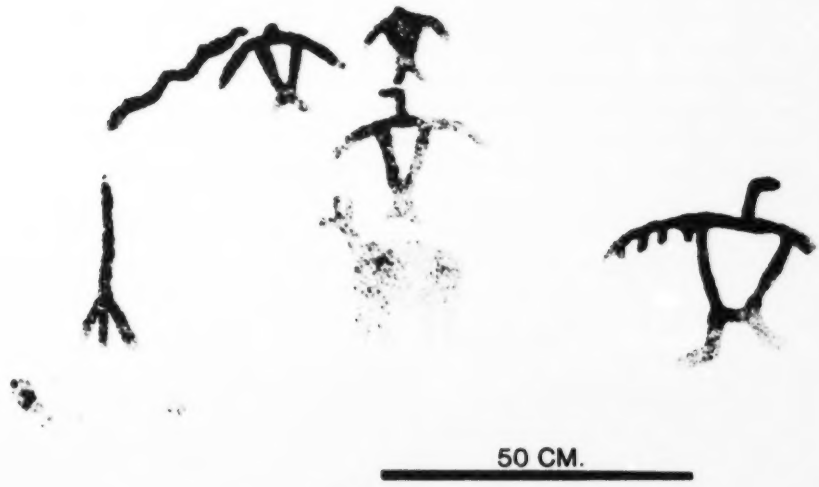


Figure 4 Reproduction of paintings at McDonald Bay.

Orientation of rock face: Not recorded; approximately 60° W. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings are reached by standing on rocks directly below the painted face. It was 1 m from the top rock, in the jumble of rocks below the paintings, to the bottom of the mammal's foot. This distance is more or less 5 cm above the "normal" water level, judging by the water line on the rocks. The water level on July 4, 1980 was 78 cm below "normal" water level as measured below the mammal figure.

Angle of rock face: Approximately vertical.

Preservation: While it is difficult to exactly delineate the edges of the paintings because of the very rough surface and natural staining of the rock, the paintings appear to be fairly well preserved. There is some minor natural exfoliation on the back of the mammal, but otherwise there is no natural or human physical damage to the paintings. Small colonies of whitish lichens are found on most of the figures. On the left prong of the trident there are three colonies, the two largest about 3-4 mm in diameter. The rock face is exposed to the elements but a slanting crack in the outcrop immediately above the paintings may divert some of the seepage water away.

Remarks: The snake painting here might have something to do with the original Cree name for Pinehouse Lake: Snake Lake.

2. Kinosaskaw Lake Site

Location: 55°43' N. Lat., 105°56' W. Long. On the west shore of Kinosaskaw Lake.

Recorded: August 27, 1967.

Paintings: There are four figures (see Fig. 5). The upper left one is a curved mark with a short vertical extension in its middle (a canoe?). Below this is a solidly-coloured creature, possibly a bird with a long, sinuous neck, depicted as diving. Four vertical marks comprise the upper right part of the group, and two curved lines are immediately below these. The pigment is a deep red rust colour, although faded by patination.

Figure 5 Reproduction of paintings at Kinosaskaw Lake.

Orientation of rock face: 58° W. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings are reached by walking over rocks that have fragmented from the 10 m high cliffs. Consequently the vertical distance above the water could only be estimated; the paintings are about 6 m above the water and some 6 to 8 m back from the water's edge (see Plate 6).

Angle of rock face: The face with the paintings leans forward about 10° from the vertical.

Preservation: There is some protection from rain, but seepage of ground water from above is apparent, and patination over the rock surface and the paintings themselves is extensive. Dark and light grey lichens are present all over the rock face, and encroachment over paintings is most extensive on the upper right figures (*Umbilicaria* sp., *Physcia* sp. and *Xanthoria* sp. are found here). There has been no other natural defacement, or vandalism, of the rock surface.

Remarks: The site is 6 km upstream from the Swimming Stone, a well-known local landmark. Selwyn Dewdney informed me (personal communication September 30, 1973) that he was told that moose horns were recently being left on the Swimming Stone.

3. Foster River Mouth Site

Location: 55°46' N. Lat., 105°50' W. Long. West shore at the mouth of the Foster River where it empties into the Churchill River.

Recorded: August 27, 1967.

Paintings: This site has three small paintings: an anthropomorphic (?) or tailed four-legged creature on the left; a small animal with a head and a tail, or two heads; and a cross below this animal (see Fig. 6). The pigment is a faded orangeish brown with a tinge of red.

Figure 6 Reproduction of paintings at Foster River Mouth.

Orientation of rock face: 70° E. of N.

Relationship to water: To record the figures, one must stand on a small horizontal portion of a slab of rock lying in the water. The left arm of the cross figure is at eye level, and water level was 2.21 m below the bottom of the cross. The rounded outcrop where the paintings occur is about 8 m high, and the paintings are on a flat surface formed by a slabbing of the lower part of the outcrop (see Plate 7).

Angle of rock face: Almost vertical; leaning forward 1-2°.

Preservation: The brightest figure is the small animal and the most faded is the upper half of the larger creature. Although the paintings are fairly well protected by trees and large slabs of rock, they are quite faded. Some lichen (mostly light grey foliose type, probably *Physcia* sp.) grows on each of the figures. Orange *Rinodina oreina* and brown *Parmelia* sp. are also found on the face.

4. Silent Rapids Site

Location: 55°43' N. Lat., 105°51' W. Long. On the north side of an island 2 km downstream from Silent Rapids, Black Bear Island Lake.

Recorded: August 28 and 29, 1967.

Paintings: This site contains a large painting of an animal (or perhaps two animals in a composite figure), and a very faded figure (a bird?) above and to the left with four round balls of colour between the two figures and a slightly oblong dot of colour to the right of the "bird" (see Fig. 7). A fuller description of the paintings is found in Pohorecky and Jones (1968). The colour of the paintings varies from vivid to fairly bright red-brown in the clearest parts (the upper portions of the large animal), to very faded in other areas.

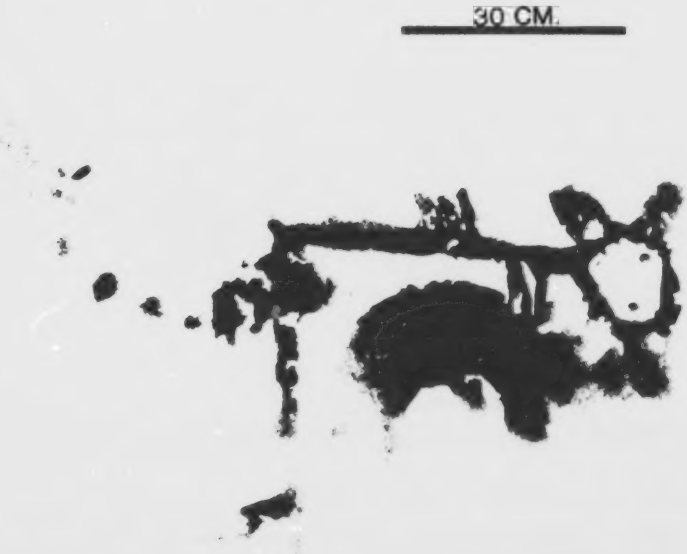


Figure 7 Reproduction of paintings at Silent Rapids.

Orientation of rock face: 20°W. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings occur on a more-or-less vertical rock face about 5 m long by 2 m high. An overhang of rock extends about 30 cm over the decorated face, and a ledge about 50 cm wide is found below the paintings. The distance from the bottom of the animal's snout to the water was 117 cm. The cliffs are about 6 m high at this location (see Plate 8).

Angle of rock face: The rock face leans forward about 3°

Preservation: The site is generally well-protected from the weather. No lichens grow on any of the paintings, although orange lichen colonies grow within 2 cm of the very faded bird (?) figure. There is some patination over the two balls of colour behind the animal and over parts of the animal's back. Some person has apparently pecked at the paintings, removing some small parts of them.

Remarks: The ledge below the paintings would have served well as a place to leave offerings. The site lies on the south shore of a narrow channel, one of the two main canoe routes across Black Bear Island Lake.

5. Wamninuta Island Site

Location: 55°40' N. Lat., 105°46' W. Long. On the north side of Wamninuta Island, Black Bear Island Lake.

Recorded: August 29, 1967.

Paintings: There are eight separate discernible paintings on a single rock plane (see Fig. 8). On the left is an upright line surmounted by a hollow circle which is almost enclosed by a curved line. Above and right is a horizontal line with an upright line at each end and an upright protrusion in the middle. Next right is a walking human with outstretched arms and a line extending from the right side of his head. To the right are two geometric symbols with a dot to the right of each. These symbols are likely part of the Cree Syllabarium developed by Methodist missionary, James Evans, at Norway House in 1841. Below the human/syllabic group is a solidly-coloured square surrounded by another square drawn in

Figure 8 Reproduction of paintings at Wamninuta Island.

outline. To the right of the syllabics is a patch of purple pigment. Above and between the human and syllabics is a faded reddish-brown line of pigment. The first figures on the left are a reddish-brown colour, the squares only slightly different (a reddish orange-brown), but the human and syllabic figures are a somewhat faded dark purple-brown.

Orientation of rock face: 2° E. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings are on a 5 m high cliff, and the water was 131.4 cm below the bottom of the right syllabic figure.

Angle of rock face: Vertical.

Preservation: The rock surface is very rough; there are gaps in various parts of the paintings, and lichens grow in some of these gaps. The predominant ones are brown-black foliose *Parmelia* sp. interspersed with grey *Parmelia* sp. and a yellow-green type *(Ramalina* sp.). There is no overhang and the face is exposed to rain and seepage. No patination was noted. Someone has painted initials in tar (?) just touching the bottom of the square figures.

Remarks: The presence of the same purplish pigment, to the right of the syllabics, on them and on the human, suggests that the human and syllabics may have been "renewed".

6. High Rock Narrows Site 1

Location: 55°38' N. Lat., 105°42' W. Long.

Recorded: August 29, 1967.

Paintings: This site consists of a single large anthropomorphic figure seen in face view (Fig. 9). The dull brown-rust pigment is very faded over most of the figure. The head is clearest and the right arm is fairly distinct. Feet cannot be discerned. A faint line appears to be drawn down the centre of the body, as in Face V at the next site downstream. The figure has two eyes and an open mouth, but no nose.

Orientation of rock face: 165° E. of N.

Relationship to water: The painting is on a 3.5 m by 3.5 m slab of rock 1 to 1.5 m thick resting on another slab in the water. The upper part of this second slab serves as a ledge to reach the paintings. The ledge was 140 cm above the water and the faint bottom of the painting appeared to be about 10 cm above the ledge.

Angle of rock face: Approximately vertical.

Preservation: Lecanora sp. and *Parmelia* sp. lichens obscure much of the pigment, and the roughness of the rock surface and pigment fading have also contributed to incompleteness of the lines. There is no overhang. The little seepage water to which the paintings would be exposed would be from direct rain. There is no evidence of patination. In a number of places ongoing natural exfoliation of the granitic rock has removed some

Figure 9 Reproduction of paintings at High Rock Narrows site 1.

of the pigment. Like sites 4, 5 and 7, this site lies on the most direct canoe route across Black Bear Island Lake.

7. High Rock Narrows Site 2

Location: 55°38' N. Lat., 105°41' W. Long. On the north side of Black Bear Island Lake.

Recorded: August 30, 1967.

Paintings: There are seven separate rock faces with paintings, the first five along the water and the last two on cliffs some distance above water (for a general view of the site see Plate 2).

Face I is very obscured by fading of the pigment and apparently deliberate chipping of the rock. Green paint has also been spread over

parts of the paintings. The only readily identifiable figure is a prone beaver depicted with a dot on either side of the head. It is a dark brown-rust colour. The figures directly above are a faded orangeish red-brown colour. In the upper left are parts of two distinct curved lines. To the right of these is a dark red-brown figure, a spot of pigment with a number of short protrusions and two curved lines extending down to the left (see Fig. 10).

Figure 10 Reproduction of paintings at High rock Narrows site 2, Face 1.

Face II drops directly into the water 6 m from the right side of Face I. There are six small faint figures here (see Fig. 11). The upper symbol is a line with two "arms" extending down and to the sides. Below this is a short line, a longer line with a lateral line attached to each end, a mark like an upsidedown check mark and, finally, a pair of short marks (not reproduced) 96 cm right of the check mark. These symbols are a faded orangeish colour, except for the left part of the pair of marks on the right which is a faded red.

Face III is approximately 20 m east of Face II. A small curved figure with a small oval below it are the only figures here (see Fig. 12). They are a faint orangeish-red.

Reproduction of paintings at High Rock Narrows site 2.

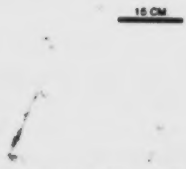


Figure 11 Face II.

Figure 12 Face III.

Figure 13 Face IV.

Face IV is found approximately 10.5 m east of Face III. Here is a large curved line in a faded orangeish red-brown pigment, with two even more faded marks below (see Fig. 13).

Face V consists of a single figure, an anthropomorph with horns, upraised arms and a line down the centre of the body (see Fig. 14). This painting is about 6 m east of Face IV.

Figure 14
Reproduction of paintings at High Rock Narrows site 2, Face V.

Face VI is a single large anthropomorphic head, with two spots of colour situated below. The head bears two large curved horns and a line extending straight up. It has eyes and an open mouth, but no nose (see Fig. 15 and Plate 9). Faces VI and VII are found east around the corner of the outcrop where Face V is found, on the high cliffs which give this place its local name of High Rock. Face VI is situated above and to the west of Face VII, perhaps 5 m further up the cliffs.

Figure 15
Reproduction of paintings at High Rock Narrows site 2, Face VI.

Face VII is an extraordinarily large group of paintings.

Pigment similarity and general balance of the elements indicates that the figures form part of a group, rather than separate, unrelated paintings.

A large, three-sided enclosure open at the top forms a frame for seven paintings: a bird with long, sinuous wings situated above a circle with a cross drawn inside, two humans with upraised arms and dumb-bell shaped torsos, an unidentified symbol below the left human, consisting of a line with three upright extensions, and a small bird with a long, snake-like line extending downward from the tip of its right wing. Above these is a three-sided box with a creature with long arms, turned sideways, as if flying or swimming. Below the large enclosure are two highly stylized human figures, one touching an apparent medicine rattle, the other smoking a pipe. Another rattle is positioned to the right of this taller human and an unidentifiable figure is positioned above his head (see Fig. 16 and Plate 10). The pigment of these symbols and of those on Face VI is for the most part very vivid — a red rust colour.

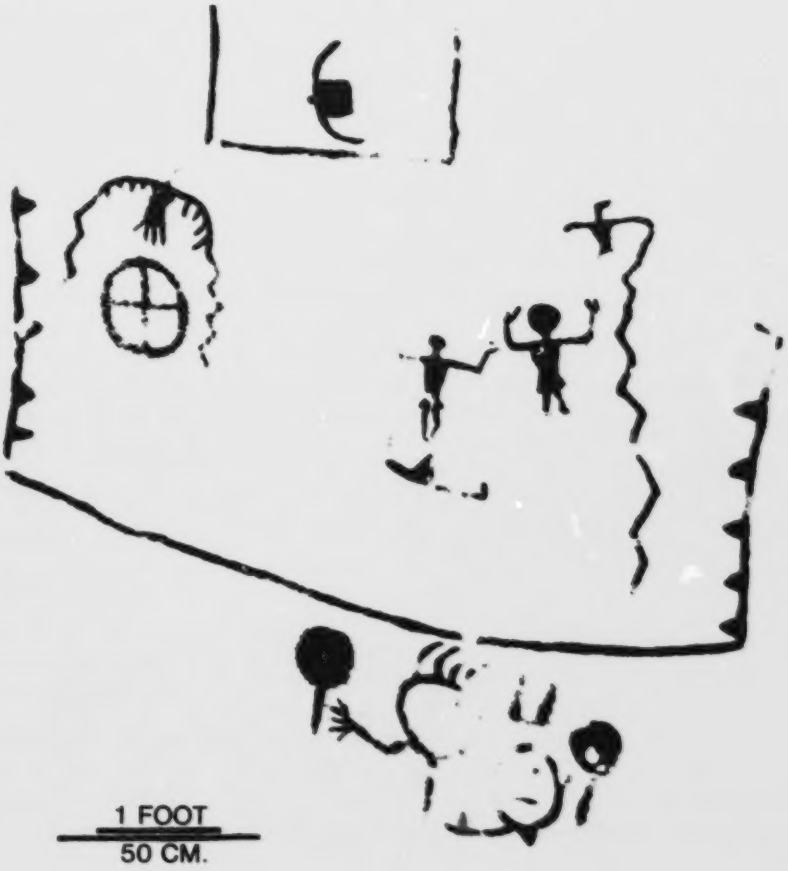


Figure 16 Reproduction of paintings at High Rock Narrows site 2, Face VII.

Orientation of rock faces: I - 165° E. of N.; II — 165° W. of N.; III & IV — approximately same as II; V — 140° W. of N.; VII — approximately same as II to IV.

Relationship to water: I — the cliffs are about 4 m high above the paintings, and there is a 30 cm overhang over the painted face. It was 137 cm from the bottom of the beaver's tail to the water. II — the cliff is only about 2 m high here. The water was 99 cm from the top of the upper symbol. V — there is no overhang, and the anthropomorphic figure is open to the rain. The water was 138 cm from the top of the anthropomorph. VII — this set of paintings is reached by standing on a 1 m wide ledge immediately below the paintings. It was estimated that this was some 6 to 7 m above water level and about the same distance inland from the edge of the rock talus below.

Angle of rock faces: I — vertical except at the upper left paintings, where the rock is dished and extends forward; II — about 5° forward from the vertical; others not recorded, but approximately vertical.

Preservation: I — very difficult to make out because of fading, and chipping and painting of the rock by someone. II to IV — exposed to the weather and quite faded. V — painted on a rough surface and light yellow (umbilicate *Lecanora* sp.) and yellow-grey (*Rinodina oreina*) lichens were growing in the various recesses in the rock, especially on the head. The outlines of the figure may still be made out well enough, however. VI — bright, except that the upper right side of the head is more faded than the rest. VII — bright, except that the lowest parts of the group are more faded. In a number of places fairly sizeable chips of rocks, including some to which paint is attached, are exfoliating from the granitic surface. However, in comparing colour slides taken in 1967 with one taken five years later and with colour photographs of Faces VI and VII taken in 1980 by Nancy McKay and family, I found no significant damage.

8. Rattler Creek Site

Location: 55°38' N. Lat., 104°33' W. Long. Just to the southeast of the confluence of Rattler Creek and a stream entering it from the northeast.

Recorded: June 30 and July 1 and 2, 1965.

Paintings: Four distinct groups of paintings and two single ones are found here on four separate rock surfaces.

Face I contains two separate groups and a single painting. The first group on the left (see Fig. 17) consists of four figures, three of which are considerably faded. The clearest is apparently a caribou, judging by the shape of the antlers and the general appearance of the body. Below it and left is another four-legged creature with a tapered, upturned tail. The first of the figures right of the caribou looks like an insect with seven "legs" along each side, and the last figure looks like a tailed creature with

splayed arms or legs. The second group on Face I (see Fig. 18) begins 169 cm right of the first. A beaver seen from above (see Plate 11) is situated above a composite of two structures with "fringes" and long curved lines attached. To the right of these is a faint front part of an open-mouthed canid.

Figure 17 Reproduction of paintings at Rattler Creek, Face I (left group).

Figure 18 Reproduction of paintings at Rattler Creek, Face I (right group).

Face II is a slab off the same outcrop in the same plane, but 40 to 48 cm forward of Face I. There is a single faint painting here of a small tailed animal, highly stylized, (see left side of Fig. 19) which is 25 cm from the left side of the canid on Face I.

Face III (see Fig. 19) begins 25 cm right of the stylized animal, and consists of two groups of interconnected lines and structures and two faded and indistinguishable painted areas to the right. There is much

Figure 19 Reproduction of paintings at Rattler Creek, Faces II and III.

pigment on this rock surface, and the lines and structures appear to be painted over earlier paintings which have since smeared and faded. The presence of the two faded figures to the right suggests this also.

Face IV (see Fig. 20) begins approximately 41 m north of the right side of Face III. The main painting here appears to be a horned bovid with a pronounced hump, the horns appearing in twisted perspective. The bison (?) is very faded. Above and to the left on a rough part of the rock face is a vivid patch of brown-red which looks something like a three-toed footprint. Below this is more pigment, most of which is obscured by a greenish-grey patina.

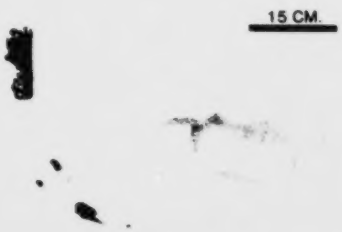


Figure 20 Reproduction of paintings at Rattler Creek, Face IV.

Orientation of rock faces: I to III — 128° E. of N.; IV — 108° E. of N.

Relationship to water: The outcrop is about 11 m high. I — the bottom of the paintings was approximately 76 cm above the water. IV — the bottom of the "footprint" was 86 cm above water on July 1st (see Plate 12 for a general view of the site).

Angle of rock faces: I (left group; Fig. 17) — slopes forward at about 45°; I (right group; Fig. 18), II and III — on rock surfaces that lean forward about 30° from the vertical; IV — leans forward about 3°.

Preservation: I — the caribou was painted on a previously patinated surface, and in turn a white patina has obscured major parts of the front of the body. Two species of *Physcia* lichen are present, with a small colony of black lichen touching the back of the caribou. The beaver has only touches of white patination, and no lichen encroachment. The large structures have considerable streaks of white over them and are further obscured by lichens and staining. The canid is faded primarily from staining. III — patination does not appear to have affected any of these paintings, and a small colony of light grey lichens was noted only in one place. IV — the rock surface is stained, possibly from previous paintings. There are no lichens on the bison, but a few small colonies of black lichen on the "footprint". There was no evidence of chipping of the rock faces at this site either in 1965 or in September, 1976.

9. Cow Narrows Site

Location: 55°32' N. Lat., 104° 32' W. Long. Southeast shore of Cow Island, Mountain Lake.

Recorded: September 3, 1966.

Paintings: Two large paintings, a human and a bison, are joined by two lines (see Fig. 21). One line connects the man's head to the base of the bison's left horn, and one line extends from the man's right wrist to the mouth area of the bison.

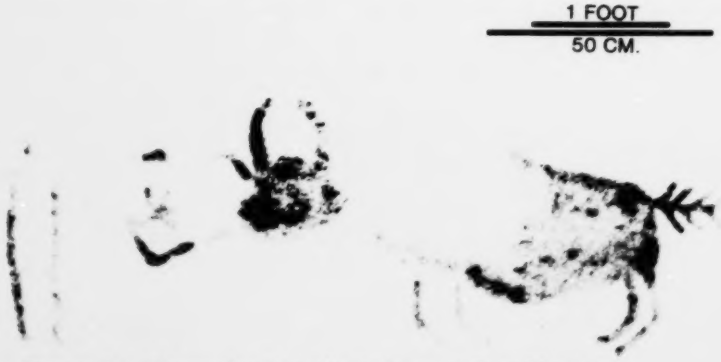


Figure 21 Reproduction of paintings at Cow Narrows.

Orientation of rock face: 172° W. of N.

Relationship to water: 2.5 m from the water to the top of the bison's left horn. The figures were traced by standing on a narrow foothold about 1 m above the water. (see Plate 13).

Angle of rock face: 45°-50° back from the vertical.

Preservation: The paintings are fully exposed to sunlight, rain, and seepage water. The symbols are very faded and stained, but the outlines can still be delineated fairly well.

Remarks: The site lies on the most direct canoe route between Twin Falls and Stanley Rapids. The setting is most unusual for Churchill River or other Shield rock paintings, in that it is fully exposed to the weather (see Plate 13).

10. Mountain Lake Peninsula Site 1

Location: 55° 29' N. Lat., 104° 31' W. Long. On the east side of a long peninsula on the west shore of Mountain Lake.

Recorded: June 25, 1965.

Paintings: An unidentifiable stick animal faces to the right (north). Above its head extends a snake-like line, and to the right of the head is a short curved mark with a mark above it. Behind the animal is a figure composed of two vertical rows of three dots, with two short upright lines between these rows and two longer marks extending diagonally upward from the top of the rows of dots (see Fig. 22 and Plate 14). The pigment of all the symbols is reddish-brown.

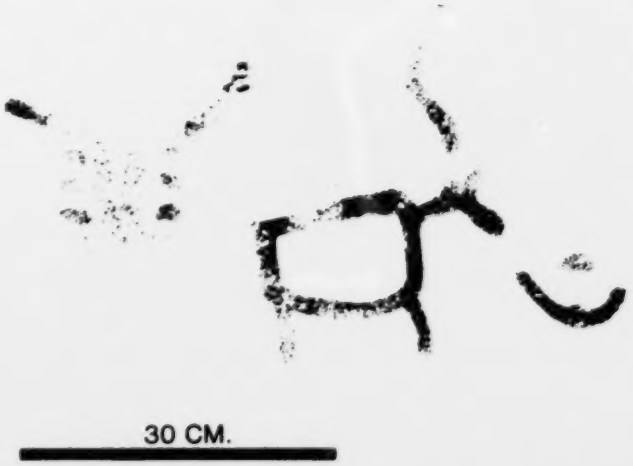


Figure 22 Reproduction of paintings at Mountain Lake Peninsula site 1.

Orientation of rock face: Not recorded, but approximately 128° E. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings were 1.7 m above the water on a 3 m high cliff and were reached by standing on the rocks below (see Plate 5).

Angle of rock face: Vertical.

Preservation: There is no rock overhang. Lichen encroachment is very extensive here, the upper part of the snake and the figure behind the animal being obscured by a film of minute brown (*Acarospora* sp.?), and *Rinodina oreina* lichens.

Remarks: This site and Site 11 are on a cliff, 3 m to 9 m high, which extends for some distance along the east side of the peninsula (see Plate 5). The rocky shore has been formed by rocks detached from the cliff. A third painting on these cliffs has recently been reported to me; it is possible that a number of paintings could have been made on rocks which subsequently fell off the cliff face.

11. Mountain Lake Peninsula Site 2

Location: 55°28' N. Lat., 104°31' W. Long. About 45 m south of site 10 on the same cliffs.

Recorded: June 25, 1965.

Paintings: A single pictograph is apparently the only one here, although there is some evidence that a second similar figure may be painted 20 cm below it. This second "painting" may simply be natural staining. The figure is a human with a head at each end (see Fig. 23). It is faded brick-red and painted on a brown-stained rock surface making the outlines difficult to see.

Figure 23 Reproduction of paintings at Mountain Lake Peninsula site 2.

Orientation of rock face: 128° E. of N.

Relationship to water: The painting is reached by hand and footholds on the cliff face from the rocks below. It was 2.4 m above the water (see Plate 5) at the time of recording.

Angle of rock face: Back from the vertical about 5°.

Preservation: There was no lichen encroachment or chipping, but there was patination on the upper head and other parts of the body.

12. Neyo Onikup Bay Site

Location: 55°27' N. Lat., 104°35' W. Long. West shore of a small bay at the bottom of Chepakan Bay, Mountain Lake; the entrance to the Four Portages route from Stanley Mission to Lac La Ronge.

Recorded: June 21, 1965.

Paintings: The figures are a human with a greatly elongated torso, and two short marks to the left of his head (see Fig. 24). The man is red-rust while the marks are faint, but perhaps originally the same colour.

Figure 24 Reproduction of paintings at Neyo Onikup Bay.

Orientation of rock face: Not recorded; faces southeast.

Relationship to water: The paintings, just over 180 cm above the water, were reached by standing on a rock slab directly below the face.

Angle of rock face: Slants forward about 40° from the vertical.

Preservation: The face is well protected from rain and seepage. The right foot of the human is somewhat obscured by white patination, and several very small colonies of black lichen dot parts of the body. The figure is quite bright.

13. Stanley Rapids Site

Location: 55° 26' N. Lat., 104° 29' W. Long. On the east shore of a long peninsula ½ km above Stanley Rapids.

Recorded: June 22, 1965.

Paintings: Two almost square blocks of outcrop have three faces of paintings. The left block, containing Faces I and II, is approximately 2.4 m square. The right block, containing Face III, is approximately 3 m square. (see Plate 15).

Face I has five separate figures including a stylized bird-iike symbol with outspread arms or wings inside a curved arc, with a snake-like figure above the bird and one to each side of it (see Fig. 25, left side; Plate 16).

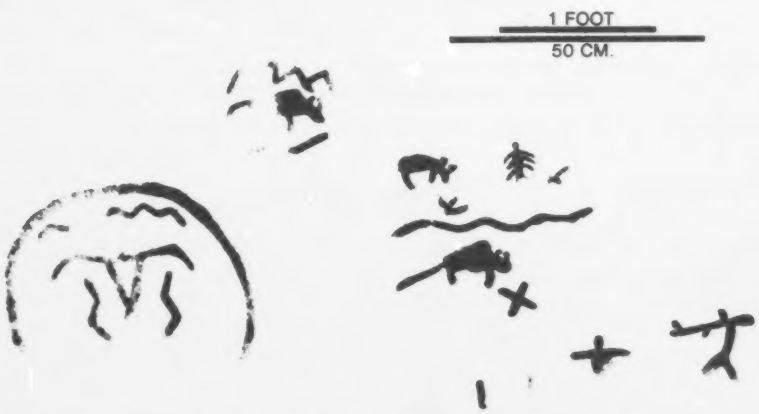


Figure 25 Reproduction of paintings at Stanley Rapids, Faces I and II.

Face II has a bison with a snake above and a curved line below. Further below and to the right are seven figures: a small bear (?), a mark like a bird track, an insect-like figure, a curving horizontal line below these, and a bison and a cross-mark below the line. Two figures, one of a small man with outstretched arms and another unidentifiable, and four faint vertical marks to the left of the man complete the Face II paintings (see Fig. 25, right side; Plate 16). All of the paintings on Faces I and II are approximately the same colour, a brownish-red, suggesting they were made at the same time by the same hand.

Face III (Fig. 26; Plate 17) includes a man shooting a rifle at a running cervid, which is apparently being chased by a dog. The dog is very faint, and its outlines are hazy. The man is clearer, and the animal is clearest, although the generalized configuration of the body and antlers does not allow an exact species identification. Below and to the left is a circle with a man inside. His arms are outstretched and his right knee is slightly bent, giving him the appearance of dancing. The last set of figures is the most faded and patinated, and the most complex. Distinct parts are a half-bodied human, with upraised arms, standing in or behind a rectangular structure. Four long curved lines extend out and downward from the structure, four short lines go upward and a solid spot of colour is inside. Below this is a horizontal row of about nine smaller spots and below the spots a small scalariform figure can be discerned. The

paintings on Face III appear to be the same colour as those on the other faces, again suggesting possible contemporaneity. The man in the circle is the brightest figure on Face III.

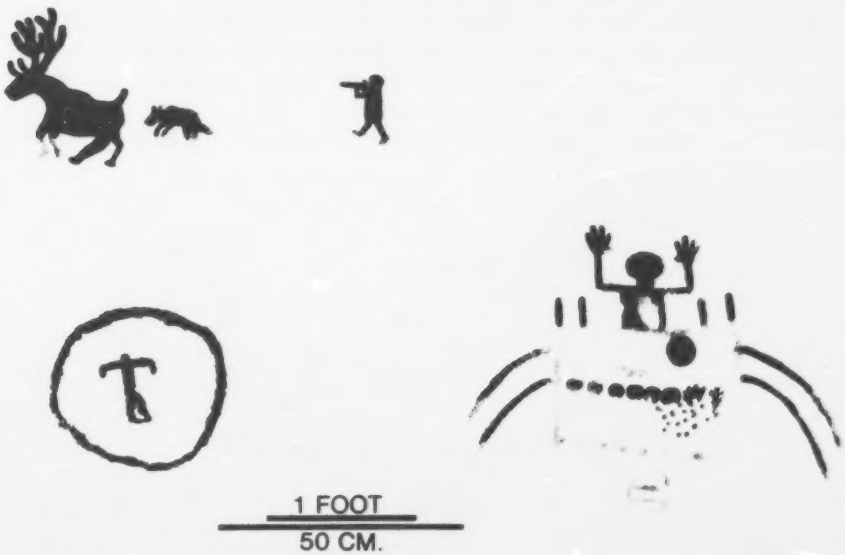


Figure 26 Reproduction of paintings at Stanley Rapids, Face III.

Orientation of rock faces: I — is on a separate rock surface formed by jointing of the outcrop, and faces approximately 158° E. of N. II and III — face 128° E. of N.

Relationship to water: All paintings were reached from large slabs of rock below the cliff faces. The bottom of the lowest painting was 1 m above water (see Plate 15).

Angle of rock faces: I — leans forward at about 45°. II — forward about 30°. III — forward about 5°.

Preservation: No lichens were noted on the paintings. Fading is evident especially on the left half of the three uppermost figures of Face II, on the lowest group of Face II, and on the lower right complex of Face III. Patination has started to cover parts of several figures on Face II, and the area below the man in the lower right part of Face III. Face III has no protection from rainfall (like I and II) and appears to be subject to groundwater seepage after rains. Although this site is undoubtedly the best known and most visited pictograph site in Saskatchewan, no vandalism was observed in 1965 or in September, 1966. Colour photographs of the paintings taken by Brian Spurling in October, 1980 showed no human damage or significantly greater natural erosion of the paintings than was apparent in 1965.

Remarks: In 1908, while conducting a geological reconnaissance of the

Churchill River, William McInnes sketched some of these paintings (Smith 1923:107). Figure 27 is a photocopy of a McInnes' field sketch now in the Public Archives of Canada (McInnes 1908, Notebook 1467). McInnes shows all the paintings compressed together. He shows the curved line which almost surrounds the bird and snakes on Face I as only a short arc. The complex figure on Face III shows the more clearly pigmented parts, much as seen today, but the fainter parts are omitted. He also omits the small bison group at the top of Face II and the two bottom-most figures which are the faintest ones today. He misplaces the

Figure 27 William McInnes' 1908 drawings of the paintings at Stanley Rapids.

insect-like figure below the line and, perhaps significantly, omits the hunting dog and the rifle-shooting man on Face III (see section on *Age of the Art).*

14. Island Portage Site

Location: 55°25' N. Lat., 104°5' W. Long. On the north shore of Inman Channel, a narrow natural channel bypassing the rapids at Island Portage on the main body of the Churchill, above a rapids in the channel.

Recorded: June 17, 1965.

Paintings: This is a group of nine paintings on a single rock face (see Fig. 28). The left painting is a human holding a bow in his left hand. Next right is a circle, then an animal with an indistinct head. Above this animal is an undulating snake figure, possibly with an eared or horned head. Below the circle and animal are two small bird tracks (?) like the one at the Stanley Rapids site. To the right of the animal is a large fragmentary painting almost totally covered by grey-white (*Physcia* sp.) crustose lichens and a black algal stain. Right of this is a small moose, which

shows a distinct hump, bell, and hock of a rear leg. This animal follows a larger moose, probably a cow (although the head is obscured by lichens and is very faded). The hock on the rear leg of the cow is very clear. The above paintings are brick-red. Below them, in a slightly more reddish brick-red, is a bison with a tailed creature attached (suckling the bison?). A solid ball of colour is to the left of the bison's head.

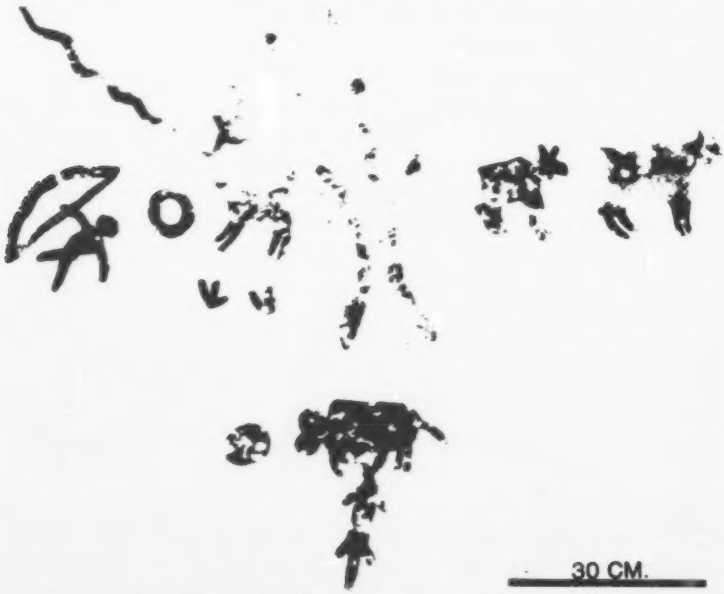


Figure 28 Reproduction of paintings at Island Portage.

Orientation of rock face: Not recorded; approximately south.

Relationship to water: The face was reached by walking over rocks a short distance from the water's edge; the paintings were an estimated 120-150 cm above the water.

Angle of rock face: Leans forward slightly.

Preservation: Lichen encroachment is very extensive, a grey crustose type being the most common and covering about half of the bison and moose groups, almost all of the figure left of the moose calf, and substantial amounts of the lower third of the snake and the animal below it. A black algal stain also covers a great part of the last two figures, the upper third of the snake, and parts of the archer's bow, the back of the bison, and minor parts of other figures. The paintings were made on a surface with a dark khaki patina. There is no overhang; the face is exposed to rain and seepage moisture. The only damage noted was some chipping to the right of the "bird-tracks".

Remarks: These paintings lie within the reservoir of the proposed Wintego Dam and might be affected by raised water levels.

15. Uskik Lake Site

Location: 55°29' N. Lat., 103°22' W. Long. On the north shore of Uskik Lake about halfway between Frog Portage and Uskik Falls.

Recorded: August 18, 1965.

Paintings: The site is comprised of two separate sets of paintings about 150 cm apart. The pigments and styles of depiction make it evident that different artists made each group.

Face I has three paintings (see Fig. 29). A highly stylized human with a rectangular head and upraised arms stands inside a structure with fringed upright lines extending above. The right figure appears to be an animal, but it is obscured by lichens. There is also a dot of colour above the structure and one near the right extension. All figures are a dark red except the dot between the upright lines which is more orangeish-brown.

Figure 29 Reproduction of paintings at Uskik Lake, Face I.

Face II has a wolf or dog as the central figure. The body of a bird extends upward from its right ear and a human with upraised arms joins the animal's back just ahead of the tail. A pipe is just left of the canid's open jaws, and a series of twelve balls of colour, forming a border for the group, extend in a curving arc below the pipe to the middle of the human's body. An undulating snake extends upward near the bird's right wing (Fig. 30). These symbols are reddish brown and are very faded in places.

Orientation of rock faces: I — 134° E. of N. II — 104° E. of N.

Relationship to water: Both faces are on low cliffs some 5 to 6 m high. I

Figure 30 Reproduction of paintings at Uskik Lake, Face II.

— is a flat surface extending 150 cm above the water. The paintings were 79 cm above the water. II — extends 2 m from the water surface. The water was 100 cm below the bottom of the lowest ball of colour.

Angle of rock faces: I — leans forward about 10° from the vertical. II — vertical.

Preservation: There are no overhangs so seepage water and rain can wet the rock surfaces. On Face I, the paint was not applied continuously. Part of the human and the structure below the man's head and arms fade to the point of disappearance. The animal painting was apparently applied quickly and only on the high points of the rock surface. Light green and grey (*Physcia* sp.) and brown (*Parmelia* sp.) lichens obscure parts of the group. On Face II, lichen encroachment is also fairly extensive. Brown lichen (*Parmelia* sp.) is found on the bird and the man; light grey (*Physcia* sp.) foliose lichen is on the pipe, the man's head and the rear of the canid. A bright orange lichen (*Xanthoria elegans*) is on the man's head and body, the bird and right front leg of the canid. Some faint scratches were noted on the chest of the canid in August, 1965, but these caused little damage. However, by the time of my return visit on June 24, 1966 someone had pecked or hammered the body, head and right wing of the bird, chipping away a great part of the figure. As well, three initials were scratched over the bird, the canid and human figures.

Remarks: This site would be inundated by the proposed Wintego Dam reservoir.

16. Conjuring River Mouth Site

Location: 55°33' N. Lat., 103°15' W. Long. On the north shore of Uskik Lake about 3 km above Uskik Falls.

Recorded: August 18, 1965.

Paintings: There are five figures: a human, an apparent pipe bowl, a large bison, and a small bird in a three-sided box. Only the right side of the human is visible, due to erosion and lichen encroachment. The pipe-bowl does not seem to be connected to a stem, although the stem may have been removed by chemical action of seepage water. The horns of the bison are depicted in twisted perspective. An internal view of the upper part of the body is given, showing the ribs by leaving six or seven vertical spaces in the hump area (see Fig. 31).

Figure 31 Reproduction of paintings at Conjuring River Mouth.

Orientation of rock face: 110° W. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings are on a low cliff of gneiss and were about 101 cm above the water.

Angle of rock face: Leans forward about 25° from vertical.

Preservation: The rock face between the pipe-bowl and the head of the bison is covered by extensive growths of light grey (*Physcia* sp.) and black (*Parmelia* sp.) lichens. The human is very faded, as is the back part of the bison, from the seepage of water and lichen and algal encroachment. The front of the bison has a light white patina. The two upper figures have a very small rock projection over them but do not have lichen growths or any degree of patination. There was some

pecking at the paint below the bison's hump, but little damage had been done.

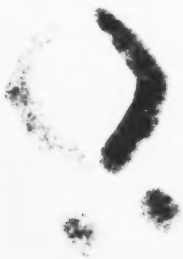
Remarks: This site would be inundated by the proposed Wintego Dam reservoir.

17. Wintego Rapids Site

Location: 55°35' N. Lat., 102°51' W. Long. Eastern shore of an island ½ km above Wintego Rapids.

Recorded: July 12, 1974 by David Meyer.

Paintings: There are two paintings: a stylized hoof-print of a bison, moose or other herbivore, showing dew claw marks, and a small curved mark to the right (see Fig. 32). The pigment is a very faded light pinkish-red.



15 CM.

Figure 32 Reproduction of paintings at Wintego Rapids.

Orientation of rock face: East.

Relationship to water: The paintings were about 1.2 m above the water in the summer of 1974 when water levels were at least 1 m above normal. The paintings are on a vertical rock face about 20 cm wide. There is no overhang.

Angle of rock face: Approximately vertical.

Preservation: There are no lichens and no defacement, but the paintings are very faded.

Remarks: The site is on what appears to be the shortest travel route through Wintego Lake from inlet to outlet. The site would be inundated by the proposed Wintego Dam.

18. Wasawakasik Lake Site

Location: 55°36' N. Lat., 102°13' W. Long. On the north shore of Wasawakasik Lake at a high outcrop called "Highrock" locally.

Recorded: August 3, 1965.

Paintings: Nine separate rock faces were utilized for pictographs. Of these faces, the first and seventh are large surfaces with several paintings each, while the small remaining ones have only a single figure each.

Face 1 has a large bird with open mouth and spread wings, holding some object with its left wing. Underneath is an approximately horizontal line with short lines extending from the lower surface. There is a possibility this latter figure may be the body of a horned serpent. Another large figure, looking something like a sitting bear, is left of the previous paintings. A long curving line extends over the sitting animal's head. The animal has a long tail which curves upward to the right, crossing the long curved line which goes over the animal, and touches the left end of the fringed line (see Fig. 33 and Plate 18).

Figure 33 Reproduction of paintings at Wasawakasik Lake, Faces I and II.

Face II has a single squattish human figure with a cone-shaped face. It is 58 cm directly below the bird's left foot. It has three fingers on the right hand. The left hand ends at a bump in the rock, and the left foot is drawn quite long (see Fig. 33 and Plate 18).

Face III (see Fig. 34) also has a single painting, a short line with three "fingers" on top, 2.3 m to the right of Face II. A pigmented area, 25 by 15 cm, is directly below Face III, but nothing could be made of it.

Figure 34 Reproduction of paintings at Wasawakasik Lake, Faces III, IV.

Face IV starts 22 cm above Face III, at an angle of 45°. A vivid red figure is here, looking somewhat like the top of an eared or horned serpent in profile (see Plate 18).

Face V is a vivid red-rust smudge 8 cm long. It is found 41 cm to the right of Face III.

Face VI is a very distinct little bird with feathers and three toes on each foot (see Fig. 35 and Plate 19). It is situated 69 cm right of the smudge, on a small surface about 30 cm square, above Face VII. This bird is a bright red-rust colour similar to the previous paintings with the exception of the one on Face II, which is an orangeish red-brown.

Face VII contains six distinct symbols and an indistinct smear in the centre (see Fig. 35 and Plate 19). On the left is a group consisting of an animal inside an oval that is open at the bottom. A vertical line with a feathered end extends through the animal. To the right are a stylized bird (?), a bird with a human-like body, and a stylized turtle(?). The noteworthy similarity among the three is a long neck and head in profile with a crook at the top of the neck.

Face VIII is in a parallel plane to that of Face VII, but is about 15 cm behind it. The single painting here is an upright line with three short appendages at top and bottom and with a long bow-like attachment at the

Figure 35 Reproduction of paintings at Wasawakasik Lake, Faces VI, VII and VIII.

top (see Fig. 35). Faces VII and VIII are a vivid rusty brown which may indicate that they were painted at a different time than others at the site, or simply that patination has altered the colour.

Face IX is a single painting around the corner of the outcrop to the right of Face VIII. Despite the vivid rusty red pigment, nothing could be made of the inter-connecting lines and smears and it is suggested that this represents random finger marks or brush cleanings.

Orientation of rock faces: I — 134° E. of N.; VII & VIII — 104° E. of N.; IX — 75° E. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings are reached by walking up a sloping rock ledge. They are 9 m from the water, situated at the base of high cliffs where large and small angular blocks of outcrop have formed detritus.

Angle of rock faces: Not recorded: Faces I, II, III, VI and IX are approximately vertical, and Faces VII and VIII lean backward slightly.

Preservation: The high cliffs offer some protection but ground water seepage from above is quite extensive in places and has provided a moisture supply for lichen growth (as on Face I) and for patination (all faces). No lichen growths were noted on any paintings except on Face I where the head and upper breast of the bird are faded because of extensive light yellow and grey crustose lichen encroachment. Part of the

bird also appears to have been painted over small patches of lichen. The body of the "bear" has extensive light yellow crustose lichen on its upper arm and touching its stomach. While patination is found on each face, it is most severe on the left group of Face VII, and on Face VIII. There was no evidence of vandalism at the site.

Remarks: William McInnes sketched some of the symbols in September of 1908 (Smith 1923:107; McInnes 1908, Notebook 1466 in the Public Archives of Canada). He drew a large bird on Face I, but not the bear-like creature or the curved line over its head. The object held by the bird was drawn like two balls of colour, one on top of the other. As well, he drew the paintings on Face IV, and one on Face VI, and the three bird-like figures on the right side of Face VII (see Fig. 36). None of the other pictographs were drawn.

Figure 36 William McInnes' 1908 drawings of the paintings at Wasawakasik Lake.

19. Maple Leaf Rapids Site

Location: 55°38' N. Lat., 102°13' W. Long. On the north shore of the river several hundred metres above Maple Leaf Rapids.

Recorded: August 1 and 2, 1965.

Paintings: Two rock faces are utilized, but the figures have the same pigment and degree of fading and are considered to form one group. At the centre is a large rectangular-bodied anthropomorph smoking a pipe (see Fig. 37). To the left is a bird with feathered wings and an undulating snake just above its head or touching its head. Below the anthropomorph is a large bull-like animal standing inside a three-sided enclosure with V-shaped projections from the bottom. On the right side of the group is another bird figure and another pipe. Below these are some iron stains which may or may not be pictograph pigment. The paintings are reddish-brown. All figures are faded, some to the point of being almost totally weathered away.

Orientation of rock face: 84° E. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings are reached by climbing onto rocks from the canoe and utilizing natural footholds on the cliff. The paintings were just over 3.3 m above the water.

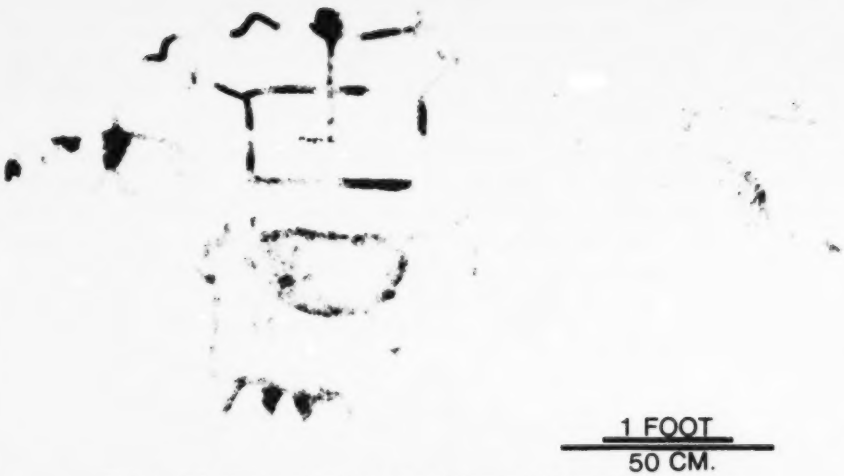


Figure 37 Reproduction of paintings at Maple Leaf Rapids.

Angle of rock face: Leans forward about 5°.

Preservation: Patination appears to be the main fading agent; it may have obscured the paintings after they had become weathered to some extent. There is an overhang of about 60 cm providing fair protection from rain, but little from seepage.

Remarks: This is the last of the three Churchill River sites William McInnes sketched in 1908 (see Fig. 38). He shows each of the figures with certain differences from my reproduction, but omits the enclosure around the "bull", and the second pipe.

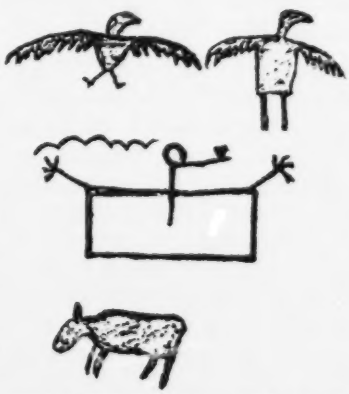


Figure 38 William McInnes' 1908 drawings of the paintings at Maple Leaf Rapids.

20. Oil Drum Site

Location: 56°30' N. Lat., 99°55' W. Long. On the east shore of Opachuanau Lake, about 3 km downstream from Leaf Rapids.

Recorded: July 8, 1969.

Paintings: This small site contains a bird-like figure with a fish-tail, and two oval dots above the bird (see Fig. 39). The bird is dark red-brown, while the dots are a faded khaki-rust colour.

Figure 39 Reproduction of paintings at Oil Drum Site.

Orientation of rock face: 115° W. of N.

Relationship to water: The cliffs are about 6 m high. The paintings were reached by standing on a sloping rock. The water level was 3 m below the bottom of the lower dot which in turn was 99 cm above a high water mark.

Angle of rock face: Leans forward 30° from vertical.

Preservation: The paint is not especially weathered, but it is difficult to make out because it was thinly and incompletely applied especially on the bird. There is a small overhang which gives some protection from rain. Seepage is not great. There was minor khaki-coloured patination over parts of the dots and on the bird's right wing.

Conservation Officer William Hatch of Leaf Rapids took colour photographs of the three Opachuanau Lake sites in early September 1980. The Oil Drum site paintings are now an estimated 30 cm above the water and are subject to wave action of the reservoir created by Manitoba Hydro's Churchill diversion project.

21. Face Site

Location: 56°30' N. Lat., 99°55' W. Long. About 180 m north of Site No. 20 on the same set of cliffs.

Recorded: July 8, 1969.

Paintings: There are four paintings: a central human face with open mouth, no nose and a long neck with three bars across it; two small birds with three dots inside the chest; and an object interpreted as a pipestem with mouthpiece and bowl (see Fig. 40 and Plate 20). There is some pigment below the right eye, which may be an intentionally painted "tear line" or simply running of paint. There is also a small curved area of pigment to the right of the mouth. The paintings are a purplish red-brown, more purplish where more patinated.

Figure 40 Reproduction of paintings at Face site.

Orientation of rock face: 115° W. of N.

Relationship to water: The face is about 14 m from the water, across a low jumble of rocks. The site is about one third of the way along the cliffs from the north end. The face is the best-protected spot, although there are a number of other suitable painting surfaces. There were several small rocks on which to stand; the paintings were at about head level or slightly above. The water was 3.63 m from the bottom of the ribbed neck.

Angle of rock face: Leans backward from the vertical about 2°.

Preservation: The paintings have good protection from rain, since they were traced and recorded under the 1.5 m overhang during a heavy rain. There is poor protection from seepage, however, as the left half of the neck and face of the central figure is obliterated by black seepage algae. Patination has made the rock face a dirty grey and has put a film over the

central figure and parts of the other figures.

Photographs by William Hatch in September, 1980 show that the paintings are about 2.8 m above the water and should not be harmed by the reservoir water regime. Patination over the paintings appears to have increased significantly over the past eleven years.

22. Caribou Nest Site

Location: 56°32' N. Lat., 99°53' W. Long. On the east shore of Opachuanau Lake about 6 km downstream from Leaf Rapids.

Recorded: July 7, 1969.

Paintings: The two main figures are apparently caribou with shoulders and open mouths. The one shoulder is solid; the other is open. The circled caribou shows rear legs with hocks like the moose at the Island Portage site. Directly above the right caribou is an X figure, and just behind that is an animal with two ears, a tail and an incomplete body line. Below this and behind the caribou is some very faint pigment. To the right of the "circle" is a very unclear figure which may be a man with a solid head (with horns?), holding a bow. To the left of the "circle" is a fragmentary figure, but it is too faded to discern (see Fig. 41 and Plate 21). All the figures are a sun-faded dark purplish-red except the X which is slightly brighter.

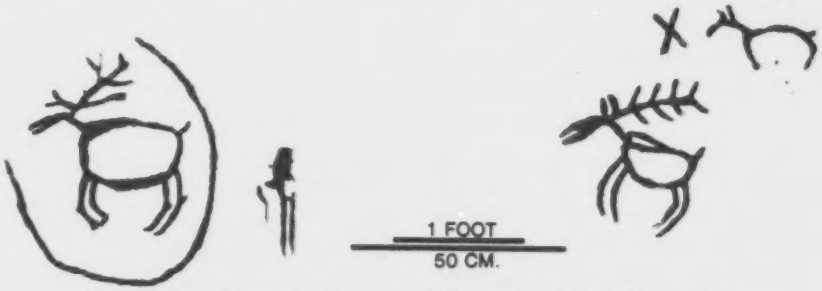


Figure 41 Reproduction of paintings at Caribou Nest site.

Orientation of rock face: 168° W. of N.

Relationship to water: The paintings were reached by standing on land which slopes upward from the water (see Plate 22). The bottom of the circle was about 175 cm above water. The water levels were about 1 m below normal when the site was recorded in 1969. There is a high water mark 3 m above the 1969 water level, and another 25 cm below this. The top of the line around the left caribou starts about 5 cm above the higher mark.

Angle of rock face: Leans forward about 5°.

Preservation: The paintings have little protection from rain or seepage.

The small animal has considerable black algal growths on it and the encircled caribou has suffered from encroachment by small black lichen growths. Patination is present, especially on the left caribou and the "man".

Remarks: William Hatch's photographs, taken in 1980, show that these, the plainest of the Opachuanau Lake rock paintings, will be affected by water action and ice scouring. The flooding caused by Manitoba Hydro's reservoir has submerged the bottom 20 cm of the caribou enclosure group.

Mr. Hatch's photographs also record two very faint pictographs which I missed in 1969. The brightest may be a small thunderbird with downward curving wings. It is situated above and to the right of the upper animal figure and is about the size of the 'X' in the main group. Another figure, apparently half submerged, is very faint. A revisit during lower water is required for proper recording of these additional paintings.

Analysis of the Paintings and Settings

Certain observations and generalizations about locations, settings and the paintings themselves will help to clarify the nature of this sample of rock art. In addition, an analysis of style, materials used, and subject matter reveals information useful for determining ethnographic identity of the artists and cultural significance of the paintings.

Physical Characteristics of the Sites

The Churchill River sites have a number of features in common, some of which they share with other sites in adjacent regions to the east and south. All of the Churchill River rock paintings are located on flat rock planes, many being within 10 degrees or so of a vertical position. These rock faces occur either directly at the water's edge or a short distance back from it. In nine cases, paintings can be reached by sitting or standing in a canoe, while in fourteen others one must walk back from the water on the rocks to reach the paintings. All the paintings are visible from the vantage of a canoe, and all face the water. This rock art setting is found across the Canadian Shield, but is uncommon elsewhere. Outside the Shield in Canada it is found only on the Northwest Coast and at some sites in the British Columbia Interior.

The placing of paintings on southerly-facing rock surfaces has in a number of cases aided their preservation, perhaps for considerable periods of time, from erosional factors (such as acidic groundwater run-off) as well as vegetal growth deterioration. It is not clear that only south-facing surfaces were used by aboriginal artists. Perhaps north-facing outcrop surfaces were also used, but the paintings disappeared after a short time. There is no evidence that the Churchill River artists scraped off lichens preparatory to painting on the rock surfaces.

The rock paintings of the Churchill River are in various states of preservation. While some symbols are extremely faded, others have the appearance of being as vivid as they must have been when first applied to the rock surfaces. Some well-protected paintings may be so faded and weathered as to be indiscernible, while others that are very much more exposed to the elements are almost unaffected. Various micro-climatological factors come into play here, and it may be that the existing paintings represent a significant span of time and several different social or ethnic groups. Vandalism or man-made environmental alteration has affected few of the sites. Various biological and chemical-physical erosional factors are the major processes effacing the paintings along the Churchill River.

At times of high water, paintings along the base of vertical outcrops may be subjected to water and ice action. In almost all shoreline areas on the Churchill River vegetation-free surfaces can be discerned in horizontal bands one metre or more above the present water level. These bands represent periodic submergence and consequent killing of the lichens and mosses on many outcrop surfaces. Until the once-flooded surfaces are recolonized by these plants, fairly well-defined horizontal marks

representing the high water levels can be seen. The rock paintings are often next to the water, in such cleared areas. Unfortunately, water-level records in key places along the Churchill near rock painting sites have not been kept, so it is difficult to establish rates of erosion on periodically flooded paintings, or the age of highwater marks.

Churchill River rock art sites were probably painted by water-travellers although there is a possibility that some paintings could have been done from the ice in winter. There seems to be no evidence that paintings were made in hidden locations in the bush: otherwise, purely accidental discoveries by prospectors, surveyors or trappers would probably have come to light by now. Therefore, we find in the Shield an approach opposite to the secret locations chosen by painters of Franco-Cantabrian cave art whose paintings and carvings may be found several kilometres inside caves, with obstacles such as narrow passageways, rock piles, and streams blocking the way.

It should be emphasized that the painter's choice of location often is not what might appear to us to be ideal. For example, there is a hiatus of sites along the river between the High Rock Narrows site 2 on Black Bear Island Lake and the Cow Narrows site on Mountain Lake. There are great numbers of suitable rock exposures in this stretch of river, but apparently none contain paintings. Similarly, the colours and textures of the rock surfaces used for pictographs vary from "ideal" (that is, light in colour and with a very smooth surface), to less-than-ideal for the modern viewer. It might be said, though, that the ancient artist *usually* used a fairly smooth rock plane and generally avoided extremely dark backgrounds for his art.

Geographical Relationships

The Churchill River is the major water feature in the portion of Saskatchewan where pictographs are found. While there are nineteen sites on that watercourse in Saskatchewan, there are also comparable numbers of sites both north and south of the river. Whether or not this latter fact relates to ease of access into these areas from the Churchill remains to be seen. In the Manitoba section only a couple of (new-inundated) sites have been reported north of the Churchill; the others are south of Opachuanau Lake.

Despite the presence of at least fairly suitable rock surfaces for painting in the study area, painting seems to have been more common in some locales than in others. Five concentrations of sites can be delineated: (1) the Foster River Mouth/Black Bear Island Lake area (sites 2-7); (2) the Otter/Mountain Lakes area (sites 8-14); (3) Uskik Lake (sites 15, 16); (4) Wasawakasik Lake (sites 18, 19); and (5) Opachuanau Lake (sites 20-22).

Sites on this river cannot be evaluated in isolation from other rock art occurrences. Figure 42 indicates the locations of northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba sites in the Shield. It is interesting to note that with the

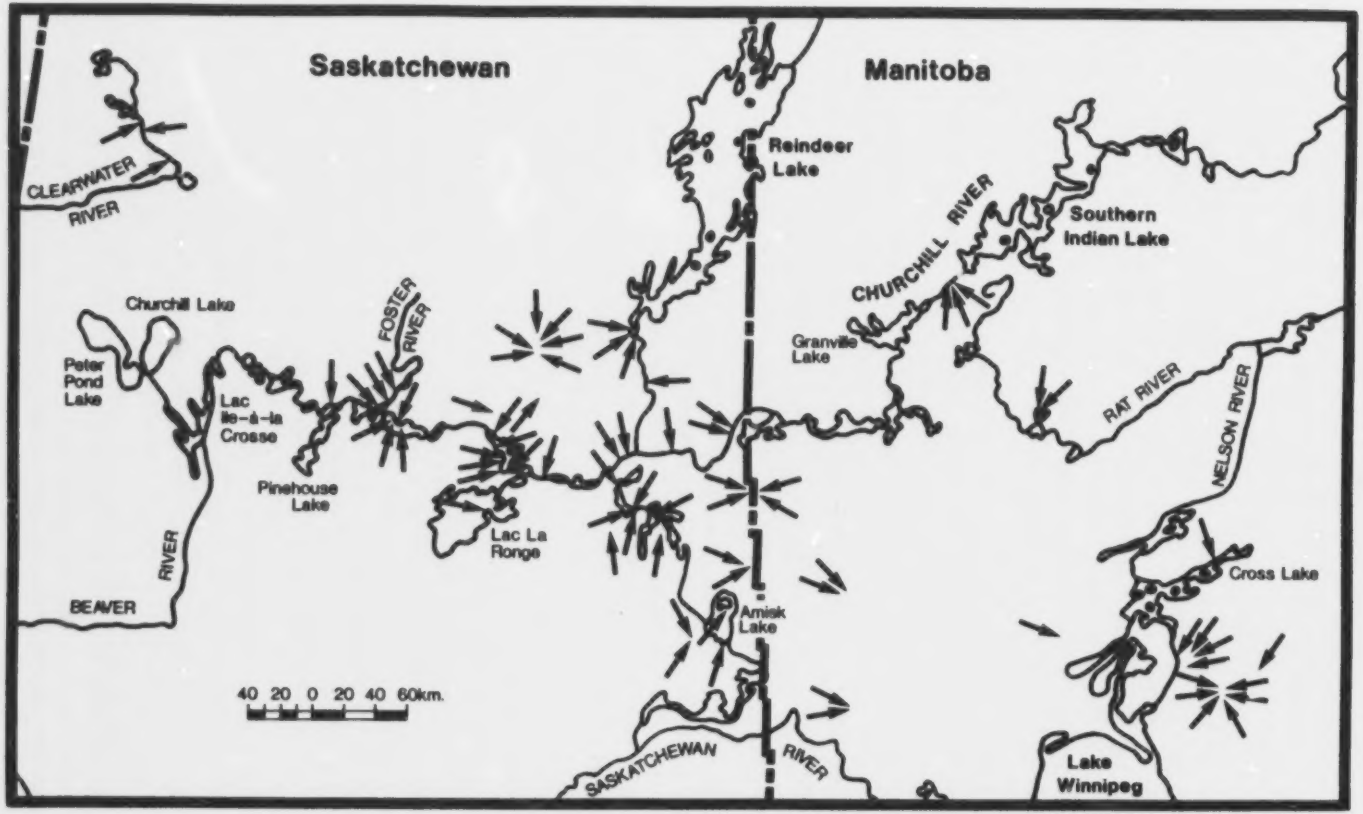


Figure 42 Map showing northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba rock art sites.

exception of the south end of Reindeer Lake and the east shore of Lac La Ronge rock painting sites are not found along the shores of large lakes on or near the Churchill. Furthermore, no petroglyph sites are known to occur along the Churchill nor, in fact, anywhere in northern Saskatchewan or Manitoba or in Ontario north of Lake of the Woods.

Figure 43 shows the approximate areal distribution of the Canadian Shield woodlands rock art style after Grant (1967) who calls this art area the Northern Woodland. The rupestral art of the Canadian Shield comprises one of the most widely distributed aboriginal art styles in North America. Pictographs have been found in Quebec, Ontario, Minnesota, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and in an isolated instance near Fort Smith, Northwest Territories. The geographical centre of distribution based on numbers appears to be in the lake country to the west and north of Lake Superior and in the Lake of the Woods region; the western-most occurrence (other than the Fort Smith site and the Clearwater River sites) appears to be the McDonald Bay site on the Churchill River in Saskatchewan. There are certain basic lines of similarity among the sites found in the boreal forest from Saskatchewan to Quebec, notwithstanding particular regional clusters of symbol types that may exist *(see also Authorship)*.

Style of Depiction

One of the most striking characteristics of the Churchill River rock paintings is the simplicity and effectiveness with which the paintings are executed. The lines and outline shapes are seldom crudely done, a difficult technical task when one considers the often rough texture of the surfaces. Careful examination such as is necessary when tracing the symbols for reproduction shows that the lines are mostly true and smooth. The paintings were done in the simplest manner that media and materials allowed.

Two basic modes of depiction were used. One indicates the outside dimensions of a figure with lines. Another fills the whole figure with paint. The first type may be called stick figures or outline figures, and the second may be called silhouette or solid figures. Some paintings display combinations or modifications of these two basic modes, such as the solidly-coloured head on the stick figure of the human at the Uskik Lake site (Face II), and the inside of the bison body at the Conjuring River Mouth site. In a number of cases, lines, dots, or other appurtenances are painted inside the body cavity of stick figures such as at the Face site, High Rock Narrows sites 1 and 2, and the Silent Rapids site.

The perspectives used were those which best show the salient features of subjects. Cervids and bovids were painted in profile, showing the bulk and proportions of the body, size of the legs, antlers or humps (if present), and the lateral shape of the head. Beavers were shown in two instances from above, emphasizing the long body, and especially the long flat tail. Human figures were usually shown from the front. Thunderbirds or birds were usually drawn in front profile with wings

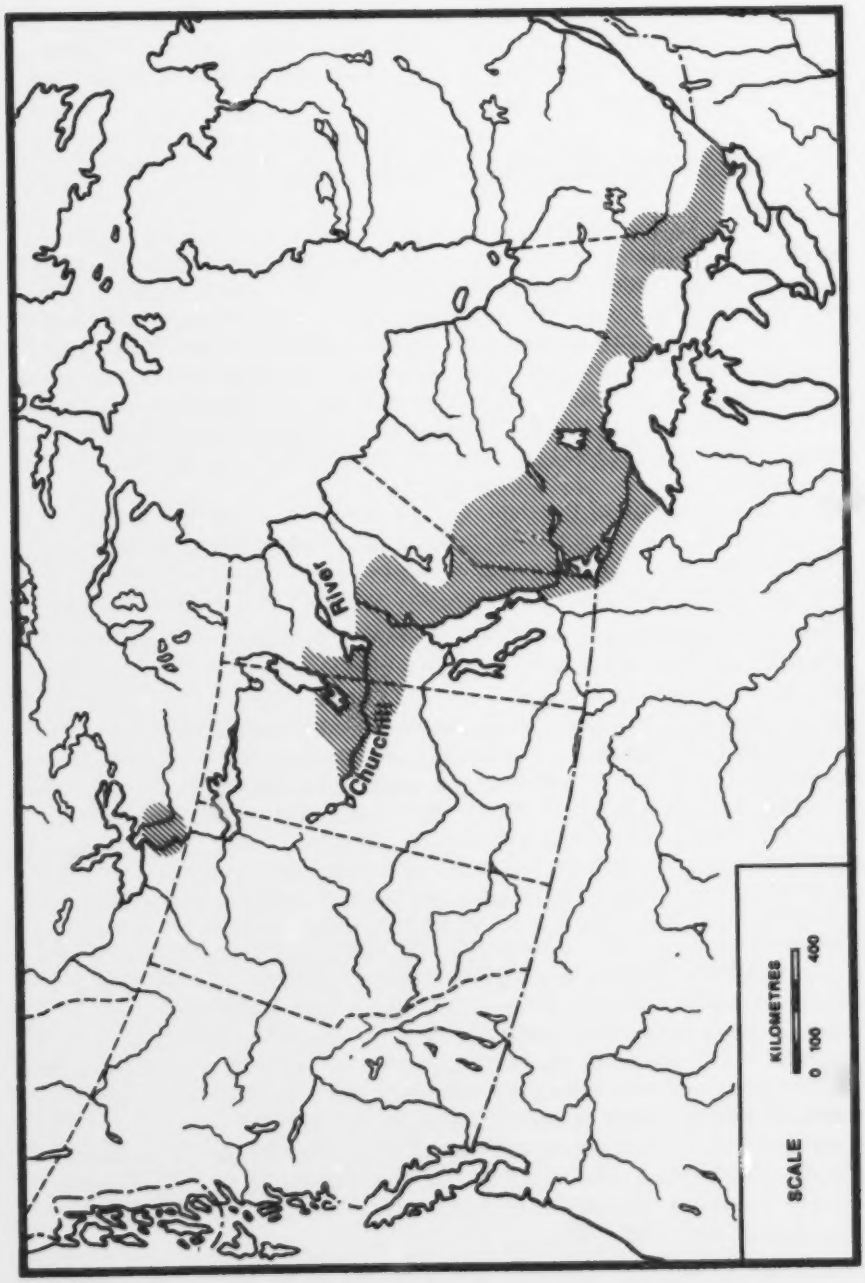


Figure 43
Map showing the Churchill River in relation to the distribution of the Canadian Shield rock art style.

extended to the sides and head turned to one side (see Wintemberg 1928). The convention of showing both horns of bison while depicting the body in side profile — a twisted perspective — is striking, and found in most sites throughout the northwest.

Pigment, Binder and Application of Paintings

Pigment:

Ochre (various oxides of iron) was used perhaps universally as a pigment by the North American Indians, and was also used widely by other peoples around the world. Rock paintings in the red-brown spectrum are usually made from iron oxides, applied either in their natural state, or heated to change the natural colour, usually to a redder hue. A number of early writers have remarked on red ochre as an aboriginal paint widely used by various Indian tribes in north-western North America. Daniel Harmon (Lamb 1957:191) recorded its use in 1817 near Rocky Mountain Portage:

> . . . along the side of the river, there is a kind of marsh where earth, of a beautiful yellow colour is found, which when burned becomes a pretty lively red. The natives use it as paint, for which it answers tolerably well. We, also, use it to paint our forts and houses.

Yellow ochre was quarried on the northeast side of Punk Island on Lake Winnipeg and burned to produce a cinnabar red. This ochre was used as a pigment by Swampy Cree and Ojibwa Indians in both yellow and red states (Hind 1860, II:18). Bernard Ross reported the procurement of "Ochres, red and blue" at several points in the Mackenzie River district by the Chipewyans, who painted their snowshoes and sleds with it (Ross 1862:135). Early European settlers also used ochre as a wood preservative and paint. About 1850, in a large commercial deposit in Quebec, four natural ochre colour variants could be obtained including yellow, red, purplish, and blackish-brown.

> The yellow is a hydrated peroxyd of iron, the purple also is probably in some peculiar state of hydration, but the red is the anhydrous peroxyd. By exposure to a sufficient heat in the furnace, the water of combination is driven off from the yellow and purple, and both becoming anhydrous peroxyd, assume the tint of the natural red ochre. . . . The blackish-brown variety is scarcer than the others and affords colours of a more valuable description; purified from roots without fire, it is sold under the name of raw sienna . . . when subjected to fire, it assumes brown of less intensity, and it is sold as burnt sienna. As it does not turn red from burning, it is probable that there may be in this ochre, an admixture of manganese (W. Logan, quoted in Hind 1857:60).

Canadian Shield rock paintings are, with rare exceptions, composed of a colour varying from a dark chocolate brown to a bright vermilion red. Most of the paintings in the Shield and all those along the Churchill River are a "rust", "rust-red", or "rust-brown" colour, most often closer to the

red end of the scale than the brown. Selwyn Dewdney reported the use of white at two sites, yellow at one, and black at another, out of slightly over a hundred sites in Ontario and Minnesota. All other paintings were done in various shades of red (Dewdney & Kidd 1967: 6). In Saskatchewan, only the Buchanan Lake site and one of the sites on Hickson Lake have pictographs in a colour (black) other than in the red-brown range.

An old Cree man from Pelican Narrows, just south of the Churchill River, told me in 1965 that red paint obtained from Wathaman Island on Deschambault Lake was heated to obtain the red colour. *Wathaman* is the Wood Cree word signifying ochre. (There are a couple of very faded red pictographs at the northeast end of this island). Another old man from Pelican Narrows told Doug Evans that ochre was the pigment used in rock paintings, and that there was a ceremony involved in the removal of the ochrous soil, in which tobacco offerings were left in the hole (personal communication May 20, 1968). Selwyn Dewdney reports that the use of "earth from a deposit on the Churchill River" made red by heating it, was told to him by a man from La Ronge (Dewdney & Kidd 1967:21). People at Norway House and Cross Lake are well acquainted with the use of red ochre as a pigment, and with its apparent use in rock paintings in that region. In 1972, I was given a small bottle of ochre of a red-brown colour from the Hairy Lake area north of Norway House, and was told locations of other quarries in localities surrounding the Norway House/Cross Lake region.

Studies by the Canadian Conservation Institute (e.g. Taylor et al 1974) have confirmed the Indian information that iron oxide (ochre) was the mineral used. Incidentally, the word *wathaman* or its variant in other Cree dialects appears to be understood by many people with whom I have spoken, suggesting the substance is still of importance cognitively. Whether or not this is because of important cultural and religious connotations is a matter for further research.

I have observed several locations along the Churchill River in northern Saskatchewan and on adjacent waterways where iron oxides occur naturally as staining either in soil deposits, or in rock outcrops. For example, a massive deposit of ochrous soil on Royal Lake on the Reindeer River, a fairly extensive outcrop and soil-stained area near the mouth of the Foster River, and a small ochrous soil deposit on an island on Nipew (Dead) Lake above Otter Lake on the Churchill River were seen on pictograph-recording canoe trips. Any or all of these deposits were easily accessible to Churchill River travellers, and any could have served as sources of paint.

Binder

Kidd has noted that: "Although preliminary tests have been made to determine the nature of this binder, it remains unknown. . . At any rate, good binders were certainly available to the Indians, and beyond a doubt

they used one or more of them, and possibly all." He suggests that beaver tails, fish roe, and the hoofs of moose or deer could have been boiled to make glue, and that gull eggs, bear grease, or fish or rabbit skins could also have been used (Dewdney & Kidd 1967:169). There is little in the way of direct ethnographic evidence regarding the identity of the exact binder or binders used in the manufacture of rock paintings, but there is some evidence which suggests one consistently well-known and suitable source. In 1972 a Swampy Cree informant at Norway House told me that an old man had told him that *wanaman* (Swampy Cree for red ochre) was mixed with something from a sturgeon to make paint for rock paintings. This man did not elaborate on what this substance was, but a number of writers have provided some clues.

Alanson Skinner, in 1908, observed the use of red ochre mixed with isinglass, a glue obtained from the inner membrance of the swimming bladder of the sturgeon. In the summer Cree men wore trousers extending only to the knee. The lower parts of the legs were painted with this mixture, which would not wash off. "When once put on it had to wear away" (Skinner 1911:23). Skinner's recording of a Northern Saulteaux legend obtained on the Albany River in northwestern Ontario also provides evidence that this closely-related group of people obtained isinglass from the sturgeon, although no mention is made of its use as a binder (Skinner 1911:171).

James Stevens relates a legend from the "Cree" (actually Ojibwa according to Wolfart 1973:51) of Sandy Lake, Ontario in which an old shaman gave a young man a powerful glue made from the marrow of a sturgeon backbone, with which he covered his hands and feet, enabling him to climb up an otherwise impassable cliff to the dwelling place of the Thunderbirds (Stevens 1971:89). James Isham, in the 1740s, reported that "the Glue the Natives saves out of the Sturgeon is Very strong and good, they use itt in mixing with their paint, which fixes the Colours so they never Rub out &c". (Rich 1949, quoted in Dewdney 1970:22).

B-Amos Ratt, a Wood Cree from La Ronge, Saskatchewan described his technique for making paint for his canoe paddles and log cabin to Selwyn Dewdney in 1963:

> . . . he took earth from a deposit on the Churchill River, reddened it by bringing it to a white heat in a frying pan, then mixed it with oil rendered from whitefish gut. The reddish-brown paint that resulted had been used to waterproof his log cabin and paddles, and dried with a slight gloss. (Dewdney & Kidd 1967:21).

Isinglass can be obtained from the swimming bladder of fish other than sturgeon, although isinglass from sturgeon is acknowledged to be superior (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1879:134). It may very well be that Dewdney's informant was actually obtaining a glue from the swimming bladder of a whitefish, following a traditional aboriginal technique for preparing a strong red paint suitable for a number of different surfaces such as wood or rock.

Another example of a durable paint formulation used on the Churchill River was noted in 1908 or 1909 by a civil engineer, Frank J. P. Crean (1910):

> At Stanley I was struck by the freshness of the paint on the church and was surprised to hear that it has only been painted once, sometime about 1861. This paint is in two colours, red and yellow, and is made from some pigment found here mixed with fish oil. I had not time to search for the pigment as no one seemed to know whereabouts it was, but I was certainly astonished at its weather-resisting properties.

The pigments used were undoubtedly naturally-occurring yellow and red ochres. The binder may have been either oil or isinglass derived from sturgeon or other fish.

It is clear from a study of Algonkian folklore and cultural practices that there is a significant link between isinglass and ochre as a strong aboriginal paint formulation (Jones 1980). Furthermore, isinglass as a glue was well known throughout the region of the northern Algonkians, the ethnographic use of isinglass coinciding closely with the Canadian Shield rock art area. It is suggested that isinglass is the most likely binder for at least some of the rock paintings of the Canadian Shield.

Other binders may have been used, or no binders at all. In a paper presented at the Third National Conference on Rock Art in Canada, John M. Taylor of the Canadian Conservation Institute indicated that no evidence of an organic binder had been found in the first series of x-ray diffraction and scanning electron microscope analyses of five pigment samples from Ontario and Quebec rock painting sites. It is possible that binders may have disappeared leaving only the iron oxide, or that only water was used in some cases. A more extensive series of pigment tests will have to be done to establish with what other possible materials paint could have been applied to rocks.

Applicators

The instruments used in making rock paintings are not definitely known. The presence of handprints at Tramping Lake, Manitoba, and at various Ontario sites demonstrates the use of one known applicator. Furthermore, many lines are about finger width, which suggests that fingers may have been used as a paint brush. But the fineness of many lines and the sharpness of a great number of paintings shows that a brush or fine applicator was used in most cases. This is especially clear at the Rattler Creek site where the legs and rack of the small cervid figure are done with lines less than 4 mm wide. Elsewhere, at the Tramping Lake site, Manitoba, south of the study area, and at the Silent Rapids site on the Churchill, fine accidental lines such as would be produced by the splayed bristles of a paint brush were seen. A man from Pelican Narrows informed Doug Evans that rock paintings were made with fingers or with an eagle feather bent over the finger (personal

communication May 30, 1968). Fur (Lamb 1957:256), or sharpened pieces of wood or bone (Mallery 1886:50), or plant fibers have been used by Indians in areas outside the Shield, and all could easily have served here as well.

Analysis of the Churchill River Symbols

The perceptual and iconographic categories of other peoples are often different from one's own, making interpretation and understanding of their art very difficult. Some symbols such as those called "geometric" in Table 2 cannot be readily interpreted and many occur only once or twice on the river or in the whole region. Other symbols defy ready classification into motif categories (see Maurer & Whelan 1977). Table 2 shows the distribution of symbols among the Churchill River sites. In Table 2, both asterisks and letters indicate presence of a symbol at a site. The letters show that I have had difficulty in assigning some symbols to classes. The problem is elaborated in descriptive footnotes supplied in Appendix III.

Humans or human-like figures are the commonest pictographic representations, occurring at 14 or 15 of the 22 Churchill River sites. In descending order of frequency are thunderbirds at nine sites; snakes at eight or nine sites including one or two examples of horned snakes; small dots or ovals at six sites; tobacco pipes at five sites; canids, cervids, rings, crosses, three-sided enclosures with fringe marks, human faces with eyes and mouth depicted at three sites each; and solid balls of colour, plain three-sided enclosures, bird tracks, and beavers, all at two sites each. A number of other symbols appear only at single sites, including horns on humans, moose, Cree syllabic writing, medicine rattles, carrying bags, canoe, a human with hair or feathers, archer holding a bow, bear, human shooting rifle, thunderbird holding an object, a possible bird in profile. Various "geometric" figures are unique to one site.

The most frequent associations are between humans and thunderbirds at seven sites; between humans and snakes at five or six sites; and between humans, pipes and thunderbirds at five sites. Snakes and thunderbirds occur at five or six sites together, as do bisons and humans. Three-sided enclosures are found at four sites with humans, thunderbirds and pipes. Snakes and three-sided enclosures are found at three or four sites together. Snakes, pipes and humans are found at three sites, and bisons and thunderbirds at two or three sites.

Comparisons of Symbols With Those in Other Areas

The inclusion of eyes and mouth on a human face is rare in the rest of the Canadian Shield (see Dewdney 1978:108-109) but five examples from three sites are found on the Churchill, three of them at the High Rock Narrows site 2. Other sites in the region showing similar faces are at Sandy Narrows (south of Pelican Narrows) and at the main Hickson-

Table 2
Distribution of Symbols Among Churchill River Sites

Site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Subject Matter																						
Human or Anthropomorph			c		•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•		v	•		•	z?
—face depicted						•	•														•	
—horns depicted							e															
—other						e	h														x	
Artifacts																						
—bow														•				•?				
—rifle													•									
—pipe							•								•	•			•		•	
—rattle							•															
—bag								•														
—canoe		•																				
—other																		t				
Syllabic Writing					•																	
Snake	•						•			•			•	p	•			w	•			
Beaver							•	•														
Bison								•	•				•	•		•			•?			
Moose														•								
Othe: Cervid								•					•									•
Canid								•					•		•							
Bear													•									
Hoofprint																	•					
Thunderbird	•						•						•		•	•		•	•	•	•	
Bird				•?																		
"Bird Track"													•	•								
Unidentifiable Animal	AA	a	c	•			g	i		•			o	q	•			s				y
Plain 3-Sided Enclosure							•									•						
"Fringed" 3-Sided Enclosure							•								•				•			
Geometrics																						
—small dot or oval				•			•			•			•		•		CC			•		
—solid ball													•	•								
—complete ring													•	•								
—cross			•										•									•
—other (unidentified object)	BB	b			d		f	j	k	l		m	n	r				u				

Maribelli Lake site (for comparisons with paintings at Hickson-Maribelli, see Jones 1976).

The two humans with horns at High Rock Narrows site 2 are unique on the Churchill River. This is a regional difference from areas to the east where the horned human is more common. The double-headed anthropomorph at Mountain Lake Peninsula site 2 is rare. It occurs c sewhere in the northwestern Shield only on Buchanan Lake, where two such figures are found.

The extremely large size of the human or anthropomophic figure at High Rock Narrows site 1 makes this figure unique. The presence of hair or hair-like appendages on the head of a human at High Rock Narrows site 2 is found at only one other place in the northwest, at the main Hickson-Maribelli Lake site, and is rare in other regions. The head with ribbed neck seen at site 21 on Opachuanau Lake is unique in the Shield, but is found with slight variations at Pictograph Cave, Montana (Mulloy 1958:127, 130), on a petroglyph boulder from Weyburn, Saskatchewan (now in front of the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History in Regina), and carved on an outcrop near St. Victor, Saskatchewan. The appearance of a distinctive Plains rock art symbol is most anomalous, and would seem to be best explained as the creation of an artist who had travelled far from his own cultural milieu.

The human holding a bow at site 14 is rare in the Shield, the only other site in the northwest being downstream and across Frog Portage on Manawan Lake some 40 km away. Dewdney notes only five other archer figures in the Shield, at Fishing and Sasaginnigak Lakes, Manitoba and at Frances and Bushey Lakes and on the Bloodvein River near Artery Lake, Ontario (1978:130 and 132; Dewdney & Kidd 1967:116-117). Shield rock art, unlike Plains sites such as Writing-On-Stone in southern Alberta (Keyser 1979), reveals few other types of weaponry. The scene of a man shooting a rifle at a running moose or elk at the Stanley Rapids site is seen nowhere else except in one other possible instance at Darky Lake, Ontario (Dewdney & Kidd 1967:36).

The figure at site 2 called a canoe by Dewdney and Kidd (1967) is a widespread symbol in Ontario, possibly representing a highly schematic view of a person (the upright line) in a canoe. In other examples, there may be several such upright lines or passengers. This is the only figure of this kind found on the Churchill River, and it is not common in the northwestern Shield. A similar painting is found at one of the Kipahigan Lake sites in Saskatchewan 19 km south of the Churchill River.

The syllabic writing found at the Wamninuta Island site is the only example on the Churchill and is very rare elsewhere. The site on Written Rock Creek near Fort Smith, Norhwest Territories (Dewdney 1977:9, 23) has an ochre inscription in syllabics below a stylized thunderbird-like pictograph. Possible syllabic figures are found at one of the Kipahigan Lake sites and at the second largest of the Hickson-Maribelli Lake sites. Zenon Pohorecky has recorded a small site with three syllabic figures on

Maribelli Lake (personal communication summer, 1977).

Snakes occur quite commonly in Shield rock art sites. It is not clear whether snakes without horns should be classed along with the horned ones. The horned serpents are another special motif relatable to Algonkian cosmology.

The two clearly defined beavers at sites 7 and 8 are very similar to each other but are not common either in the northwest or in the east. Another definite beaver is seen at a site in Proctor Narrows on Kipahigan Lake. Dewdney and Kidd (1967) do not indicate its existence in rock paintings east of Saskatchewan.

Bison paintings are found in the central part of the study area as well as near Medicine Rapids on the Sturgeon-Weir River, on Tramping Lake in northern Manitoba, and in southeastern Manitoba and northwestern Ontario in a number of occurrences. All these areas bordered on the former range of the animal in pre-contact times. The lines connecting the man and bison at the Cow Narrows site are not found anywhere else on the river or in the region. They resemble representations for magical control possessed by shamans, seen often in Ojibwa birch bark pictography (e.g. Hoffman 1891:255; see Dewdney 1978:121-122 and Fig. 45 for a similar pair of paintings on the Poplar River in northern Manitoba).

Only two animals definitely identified as moose are found on the river, both at the Island Portage site. Moose are most readily characterized by the bell, an elongated piece of hair-covered skin hanging below the jaw. Moose paintings occur infrequently in the northwest, being more common south and east of Lake Winnipeg.

A small figure at the Stanley Rapids site resembles a small stylized bear. A large figure next to a big thunderbird at the Wasawakasik Lake site also may represent a bear or a mythical bear-like creature. Bear-like pictographs similar to the Stanley painting are found in several sites in northwestern Ontario (Dewdney & Kidd 1967:74, 113). An undoubted bear pictograph is found at the largest of the sites above Medicine Rapids on the Sturgeon-Weir River, some 100 km southeast of the Stanley site (Dewdney 1963:5).

Small dog or wolf-like animals are found at sites 8 and 13, and as a large central animal at site 15. The animal chasing the cervid at the Stanley Rapids site can be identified as a dog because of its association with the hunter, and provides a unique pictographic record of the Algonkian use of dogs for hunting.

At the Uskik Lake site a series of dots below a group of symbols seems to underline the group, but elsewhere dots or ovals are isolated occurrences or parts of other figures. At other places in the Shield (e.g. Dewdney & Kidd 1967:35, 72, 76) such figures may represent routes, tracks or travel by animals or humans. The animal tracks at Wintego Rapids is the only one of its kind in the Shield rock paintings, to my

knowledge, though it is very common in the petroglyphs of the plains. There are many such tracks showing dew claws at the St. Victor, Saskatchewan petroglyph site.

The complete absence of fish paintings in the northwestern part of the Canadian Shield should be noted since fish played a major part in the diet of the peoples who have lived in the area. Neither do we see paintings of Underwater Panthers or Great Lynxes (*misipisiw* in Wood Cree) which occur in Ontario Shield sites. No turtles are found in the north (except possibly at the Wasawakasik Lake site), while they are found in boulder effigies and petroglyphs on the Plains to the south and in Ontario rock paintings. Also absent are other symbols which would indicate European influence such as ships or forts, or other obvious European artifacts, with the exception of the rifle at site 13. European influences are slightly more common in northwestern Ontario rock art.

The rattles with the humans at site 6 are undoubtedly depictions of sacred paraphernalia, and the pipe that one of them is smoking probably falls into this category too. Other pipes seen along the river undoubtedly symbolize sacred ceremonies. Saskatchewan sites with pipes (Nos. 7, 15, 16 and 19) depict platform pipes, a type most commonly found in the Plains area. The portrayal of a platform pipe may represent contact with people from the Plains. In Manitoba the Face site has a different type of pipe with a rounded bowl, a stem, and perhaps a mouth-piece.

There appears to be only one example, beside site 7, of a medicine rattle being associated with a human. It was recorded by Steinbring (1978: Fig. 2) on the Rice River in southeastern Manitoba. The large figures with looping lines and fringes at Rattler Creek would appear to be carrying bags or medicine bags of a design seen elsewhere only on Buchanan Lake some 45 km northeast of Rattler Creek. They are similar in appearance to a Lake Winnipeg Cree bag dating from before 1840 in a German collection (Benndorf & Speyer 1968:46; Plate 13).

Several of the sites on the Churchill River have enclosures in which thunderbirds, bison, humans, and other creatures are painted. Neither this device nor the painting of horizontal lines to divide creatures into separate domains (as at Larocque Lake and at Amisk Lake) is found further southeast in the Shield. The addition of fringes or V-shaped protrusions to such enclosures or lines is also a noteworthy local motif peculiar to this northwestern area.

Thunderbirds occur at six sites in the eastern part of the Churchill in addition to the quite widely separated occurrences upstream on Pinehouse Lake, at Stanley Rapids, and at High Rock Narrows site 2. Tobacco pipes occur at four of these six thunderbird sites and at High Rock Narrows site 2 as well, suggesting a significant co-distribution of these motifs (see also *Interpretation*, this book). The frequency of these symbols is also greater than in other locations to the south and east.

In sum we see, first of all, that the style of painting definitely links the

Churchill River artists to the whole of the rest of the Canadian Shield rock art tradition. Second, while technical studies have not been conducted in sufficient number to confirm it, there seems to be every reason to believe that the materials used to create this type of artifact were similar across the Shield. Third, certain of the symbols themselves (such as snakes, bison, thunderbirds, and moose), are clearly similar to those found in sites hundreds of kilometres to the east in the Shield.

However, it is clear from some of the symbols and combinations of symbols on the Churchill River that the artists who painted here shared the Canadian Shield rock painting tradition, but also shared with each other a type of regional distinctiveness in their art expression (see also Conway 1979). Historically the widespread Algonkian groups who lived across the Canadian Shield — the Cree, northern and southern Ojibwa, and Algonkins — are known to have shared a striking similarity in a number of cultural characteristics, but each local and regional group was separate from all others in important ways. The local markers of distinctiveness were often dialect or language differences, religious practices and technological details.

It might be reasonably expected that the artistic expressions of these ethnic groups would be somewhat different from each other through time, if the ethnicity seen in the historic period is assumed to extend into prehistoric times. This analysis of rock art indeed does suggest a degree of ethnic distinctiveness for the artists who made the Churchill River pictographs.

Age of the Art

One of the key questions concerning any prehistoric phenomenon is age. Compared to other questions, age may seem like a straightforward problem, but it is not always easy to answer, especially if no well-established dating method or regional archaeological chronology has been developed for the area under investigation. But even if a local chronology were available, rock paintings would be very difficult to place in it because rock paintings are not buried, are not excavatable, and, therefore, are difficult to place in any archaeological context. However, since the rock paintings were made at some time in the past, a number of possible dating methods have been considered. Some, while not applicable during the course of this study, may be developed as viable methods for dating rock art in the future. At present, the most solid evidence for the approximate age of individual sites and for the paintings found in the general area is derived from historical and ethnographic documentation rather than from physical dating methods. The potential methods for dating these rock paintings are discussed below.

Radiocarbon Dating

The radiocarbon method involves measurement of radiation in a sample of organic material. Unfortunately, rock paintings contain little or no organic material. Even if carbon was present in the paintings, dating would require a sample of 50 to 100 grams of paint, depending on the percentage of organic material still present. An absolute minimum of about 3 grams of carbon is needed to proceed with dating (Andy Rutherford, personal communication November 9, 1973). In order to obtain enough paint for a sample it would be necessary to remove many paintings and this would likely mix paint of differing ages. Consequently, the traditional radiocarbon method is not a feasible one. However, recent work by physicists and others has focussed on refining the technique by devising methods for measuring minute quantities of trace elements in geological and archaeological materials. One such method being developed at the University of Toronto involves the use of a mass spectrometer and tandem accelerator, to count C14 atoms. The method may be able to analyze a sample "the size of a dust speck" (Ohlendorf 1980:14). Such a technique could prove to be a major breakthrough in dating rock art.

Lichenometry

In the Canadian Shield, rock lichens are ubiquitous, and are often found growing over parts of various rock art paintings, including those on the Churchill River. Lichens are composed of two organisms in close symbiotic relationship, an alga and a fungus which cling tenaciously to rock surfaces. Lichens often live in extremely harsh habitats, and their growth rates are very slow. Lamb (1959:144) states that certain lichen colonies have been estimated to be more than 2,000 years old. Certainly the habitats where lichens are found on the Churchill River rock paintings are very harsh, and some lichens here may be of a comparable age.

Paintings tend to be found on surfaces where there is, or at least was, a minimum of lichen growth. Nevertheless, many painted rock surfaces have been encroached upon by lichen growth. In cases of encroachment there would seem to be a potential for dating the paintings beneath the lichens.

The most reliable method for lichen dating is to compare the types and sizes of lichen colonies on the rock face in question with colonies on rock faces of known dates. Unfortunately, dated emergent rock surfaces do not exist in the study area, except perhaps below the Whitesand and Island Falls dams where water-covered rock outcrops were exposed over 30 and 40 years ago, respectively. But whether the lichens have been removed by subsequent water or ice scouring remains to be studied in the field. However, the greatest problem is that the variables in lichen growth are yet not fully understood. This is exacerbated by the growth rates for some species being so slow that growth is difficult to measure. Beschel reports (1961:1046) that one observer photographed lichens that did not change in twenty years. Yet the major drawback to ready use of the method is the fact that each rock face on the Churchill River has a separate set of micro-environmental conditions which will either hinder or promote growth rates relative to other surfaces. A number of other problems are associated with lichenometry, but it may be possible to apply this technique to dating rock paintings after much more is learned about lichens and their rates of increase under varying microclimatological conditions. Taylor et al (1979:301-307) have discussed the potential use of lichenometry in dating shield rock art and conclude that "there are so many unknown variables, and some known ones, that lichen dating is a very distant possibility".

Weathering

There are many variables involved in studying the relative or absolute age of a particular painting such as the nature of the pigment and mixing medium, the rock base, and chemical and mechanical erosion forces. The Canadian Conservation Institute of the National Museums of Canada has begun work on conservation of rock art with an attempt to date Shield rock paintings. The preliminary results on granitic surfaces suggest that many of the Shield paintings have been painted on a thin layer of colloidal silica which was deposited on the rock face by organic acids seeping down from vegetation above. This deposition of colloidal silica is continuous, before the paintings are made, and afterward. An insoluble surface coating is thus formed over the paintings, sealing them in. If this pattern holds for the Shield generally, rates of deposition may be determined and a new dating method may be developed (Taylor et al 1974, 1975; Myers & Taylor 1974; Taylor et al 1979).

Water Level Marks

Records which include water flow variations for the Churchill River have been kept only since the 1930s at the Island Falls Dam but we are

unable to correlate the positions of rock paintings to these few records. William McInnes (1909:89) noted that, on Southern Indian Lake, not far downstream from the Opachuanau Lake sites, "fresh water-worn surfaces 4 feet above present high water level, on which the lichen and moss are only beginning to grow . . . indicate an older high water level perhaps 50 years old, when the volume of water carried by the river was greater than now". Unfortunately, the potentially useful information provided by McInnes is nullified by the absence of data concerning the position of the Opachuanau Lake paintings in 1908, or by the position of this high water mark today.

Pigment Differences

One noteworthy characteristic of the major Churchill sites is that most of the paintings have bright pigmentation. Dissimilarity in pigment at some sites may indicate that an individual artist mixed two or more separate paints to make different-coloured figures; that two or more artists were painting simultaneously at a site; or that two or more artists were painting at different times. At each of the major Churchill River sites (including sites 7, 8, 13 and 18) we see some evidence of different paint formulations and other indicators of age such as erosion and faintness of pigment and patination over paintings. In each of these sites the brightest paintings are little-affected by patination, fading or lichen growths. The exception to the general rule is Face I at Site 18, where large lichen colonies are found in the bodies of two animals.

Relative absence, or rather, the slight effects of erosion on these paintings suggests that they may be somewhat more recent than the other paintings at these sites. However, it must be noted that vividness may be due primarily to fortuitous circumstances of exposure. At any rate, two observations may be made. First, some of the largest individual paintings and some of the largest groupings may have been made in more recent times. Second, at some sites where paintings already existed, later artists added their symbols to the rocks. This is supported by the presence at some sites of very faded symbols or smeared ochrous areas over which clearer paintings have been made (cf. Fig. 19 this volume and Churchill River Basin Group 1973:7).

Superimposition

By the principal of superimposition, a painting over top of an existing painting will be younger than the one it covers. In other areas of the world superimpositioning of carvings or paintings has provided good dating clues (Grant 1967:45, Wellman 1979:546-556), but in the Canadian Shield superimposition is extremely rare, as paintings are generally made on completely separate rock faces. There are only two possible examples on the Churchill River: Face III of the Rattler Creek site; and Face I of the Wasawakasik Lake site. In the latter case, the end of the tail of the stylized bear (?) crosses another line. The superimposed pigment appears to be the same colour as the painting it crosses,

although the underlying painting is more faded.

Amino Acid Dating

Among future possibilities should be mentioned the new field of amino acid dating, in which absolute dates are calculated by the loss of amino acids from paint binder. In South West Africa, E. Denninger completed a series of dating experiments on 155 rock painting samples. He recognized at least five groups of dates, the oldest being about 1,500 years (King 1973:357). This method depends on the existence of enough original organic binder to provide a sample for dating. As well, the amino acids contained in the binder must be known before the analysis can proceed.

Evidence from Subject Matter

Indicators of age are derived from the subject matter of several rock paintings on the Churchill River. The syllabic writing at Wamninuta Island and the man shooting a rifle at Stanley Rapids are two maximum time markers. The syllabics cannot be older than 1841 A.D. at which time the Cree Syllabarium was introduced to the Swampy Cree at Norway House by James Evans. Its appearance in the aboriginal ochre pigment is uncommon, being found at only four or five sites in the northwest, although syllabic inscriptions are found occasionally scratched into lichens near rock paintings. The maximum age of the rifle-shooting man at Stanley Rapids is more difficult to determine, because the precise time that rifles (or accounts of their use) entered this locale is unknown. The most likely route of diffusion was from Hudson Bay where English traders set up their posts around 1680. The first inland trading post on the Churchill River was built by Joseph Frobisher in 1774 at Frog Portage, and the first one at Lac La Ronge was built in 1779 by Etienne Waden (Morton 1939:290, 334). The rifle was probably used earlier in the Stanley area since Mackenzie reports that Frobisher went to Frog Portage to intercept Chipewyans who had been travelling to trade with the Hudson's Bay Company at Churchill. However, the maximum date for the Stanley Rapids paintings can extend back only to the latter part of the 17th Century. Mandelbaum (1940:177) states, "Although in 1670 they are noted as having only the bow, in 1690 Kelsey remarks that the Cree and Assiniboin, armed with guns, have turned the tables on their enemies and have put them to rout. They soon had little use for the bow". An additional clue is provided by a detail evident on the rifle in the form of a small bump above the trigger area, possibly meant to represent a percussion cap or flint-striking platform. Flintlock rifles may have been used even after the turn of the 20th Century in some areas of the Shield.

Of course the maximum ages assigned to these two particular groups of pictographs cannot be used to date all the Churchill River paintings — perhaps none of the others. Other artifacts depicted on the river do not show any European influences. The bow seen at the Island Portage site

(and also at the nearby Manawan Lake site just south of the Churchill River) may indicate that these paintings were done before European contact. However, it must be noted that this is not necessarily so. The use of bow and arrow is noted by Matthew Cocking in 1773 among the southern Plains Indians (Burpee 1908). Both bows and guns are seen in battle scenes in petroglyphs at Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park, Alberta and old Indian informants in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba recall the use of bow and arrow for hunting when they were youths. The contemporaneous use of both weapons thus militates against archer pictographs being necessarily prehistoric.

The platform-type smoking pipes seen along the Saskatchewan part of the river would appear to be related to Plains types. To my knowledge such a pipe has not been found either in excavation or as a surface find in the Shield of northern Saskatchewan or Manitoba. Thus, cross-dating using artifacts cannot be attempted until excavations yield the necessary distinctive artifact types.

Historical Observations

William McInnes' sketches of pictographs at the Stanley Rapids, Wasawakasik Lake and Maple Leaf Rapids sites in 1908 give us a minimum age of 70 years for some Churchill River sites. McInnes' drawings of symbols at the Wasawakasik Lake site (Fig. 36) do not include a bear, suggesting that the bear was done subsequent to his visit. McInnes often omitted fainter figures in his field sketches of pictographs (see also Dewdney & Kidd 1967:69), but the bear is just as bright as the thunderbird next to it. The apparent superimposition of the tail of the bear over another painting adds to the possibility that the bear is less than 70 years old. At the Stanley Rapids site, McInnes did not sketch the rifleman or hunting dog. Both the dog and man are very faint today, and the geologist may simply have omitted some pictographs on Face III.

Among the many explorers who must have noticed rock paintings or had them pointed out to them by native guides, Alexander Mackenzie was one of the few to record their occurrence. Such records are invaluable in that they give us some clue as to the time depth of this art. In either 1787 or 1792, on one of his two major exploration expeditions to the north and northwest, Mackenzie noted rock painting locations on Black Bear Island Lake and on Sandfly Lake:

> At some distance from the silent rapid, is a narrow strait, where the Indians have painted red figures on the face of a rock, and where it was their custom formerly to make an offering of some of the articles which they had with them, in their way to and from Churchill. . . .
>
> In this traverse [Sandfly Lake] is an island, which is remarkable for a very large stone, in the form of a bear, on which the natives have painted the head and snout of that animal; and here they also were formerly accustomed to offer sacrifices (Lamb 1970:122-123).

These two sites are therefore at least 190 years old. It should be noted that there are five known pictograph sites near Silent Rapids which could fit this vague location (Pohorecky & Jones 1968). Either the other paintings were done subsequent to his visit or only one site was pointed out to Mackenzie. The unusual bear-shaped stone with the head features painted on it has not yet been discovered on Sandfly Lake, although I searched for it in 1967.

Outside the Churchill River area other observations have been recorded which give some idea of the time depth of Canadian Shield rock paintings. While crossing the Painted Stone Portage, a height of land between the Hayes and Nelson Rivers, in 1819, Sir John Franklin noted (n.d.: 41) that "there was formerly a stone placed near the centre of this portage on which figures were annually traced and offerings deposited by the Indians. . . ." Also, in northern Manitoba, Robert Bell, a geologist, saw paintings on Molson Lake, which he was told were painted by the father of the chief of a band of Swampy Cree that had moved to Fisher River from Norway House a few years previous to Bell's visit in 1879 (Bell 1881:7). This would place such paintings at about the middle of the 19th Century.

In Quebec, an apparent reference to rock paintings is found on a 1731 map of the "Domaine du Roi en Canada" which was drawn up by Pierre Laure, a Jesuit missionary. On it he wrote a notation beside a lake situated between the Rivière aux Outardes and the Manicouagan River, to the effect that, 'on voit sur les rochers de ce lac différentes figures peintes au naturel et ineffaçables' (Charles Martijn, personal communication 1970).

Archaeological Evidence

The Churchill River and, indeed, most of the boreal forest of Saskatchewan may be regarded as an archaeological hinterland. Before the mid 1970s there was little archaeological investigation of any kind in the whole northern half of Saskatchewan. A few scattered finds were briefly reported by Joseph Tyrrell (1894 — Cree Lake), P. G. Downes (1938 — Reindeer Lake), and Richard MacNeish (1951 — eastern Lake Athabasca). In the 1950s and early 1960s, Harry Moody of Denare Beach collected and recorded finds in the Amisk Lake-Sturgeon-Weir River area and up to Frog Portage on the Churchill River. In 1961, James Brown's work concentrated in the upper Sturgeon-Weir River and on the Churchill River as far as Trade Lake (Woodbury 1962:120).

Since 1975 several major archaeological studies have been done in northern Saskatchewan. In the far north James Wright (1975) and Sheila Minni (1976) have described the results of their surveys and excavations on Lake Athabasca and Black Lake respectively. Michael Forsman (1976) has described similar research done on Montreal Lake, to the south of the Churchill River. Closer to the Churchill rock paintings area, Allan Fedje (1976) described artifacts collected from four sites in the

vicinity of the southern end of Reindeer Lake. The most directly relevant research, however, was conducted by the Churchill River Study's archaeology sector in 1973 and 1974 as part of a social, economic and environmental impact study of a proposed hydro-electric dam at Wintego Rapids (Meyer & Smailes 1975). In this study, the Churchill River was surveyed from Drinking Falls (upstream from site 14) to Wintego Rapids (downstream from site 17), and the Reindeer River from its confluence with the Churchill to the Whitesand Dam near Southend. Meyer and Smailes (1975:34) have divided the archaeological record of the area into three major periods, and the prehistoric period into seven phases or cultural traditions as follows:

1. **Contemporary Period** — A.D. 1900 to the present;
2. **Historic Period** — A.D. 1700-1900;
3. **Prehistoric Period** — about 6000 years ago to about A.D. 1700:
   (1) *Grass River phase* — about A.D. 1200-1700
   (2) *Clearwater Lake phase* — about A.D. 800-1700
   (3) *Manitoba phase* — contemporaneous with the Clearwater Lake phase
   (4) *Laurel culture* — about A.D. 0-800
   (5) *McKean complex* — about 1400 B.C.
   (6) *Shield Archaic tradition* — prior to 1000 B.C.
   (7) *Plano tradition* — 4000-3000 B.C.

Meyer and Smailes did not establish a direct connection between excavated artifacts and rock paintings but they do note (1975:51-2) that the rock paintings generally coincide with the distribution of the Clearwater Lake phase and may be attributed to the prehistoric and historic Cree (see also Meyer 1978, and the section on *Authorship*, this book). This line of reasoning coincides with some previous guess dates for Shield paintings of approximately 300 to 500 years (Pohorecky & Jones 1971:14).

Several publications have resulted from archaeological research in adjacent northern Manitoba (Wright 1968a, b, 1970; Hlady 1970; Dickson 1972) but none attempt to assign an age to rock paintings in the region. One attempt has been made to date a rock painting by use of archaeological remains in southeastern Manitoba (Steinbring & Elias 1968: 499-501), where the authors correlate a mean water-level rise occurring around 1350-1400 A.D. with the partial dissolution of a moose painting on the Bloodvein River and the presence of moose bones in the Lockport site dating from around 1,000 years before present. Steinbring and Elias conclude that the painting was made between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1350.

A more convincing example is given by Chernetsov (1964; also discussed by Dewdney 1974:23). Chernetsov was able to associate red ochre rock paintings in the Ural Mountains of the U.S.S.R. with designs incised in ceramics found in stratified sites in the same area dating between 2750 and 3000 B.C. Rock paintings in the Canadian Shield do

not appear to lend themselves to this type of inferential dating (with the possible exception of the Bloodvein River moose), but the significance of the Russian example is that the Canadian Shield paintings, which are in a similar environment to the Ural paintings, could be much older than present concrete evidence suggests.

A more likely type of archaeological dating of Shield paintings might involve the dating of artifacts left at pictograph sites as offerings. The chronological sequence of artifact assemblages established by the Churchill River Study is a step forward. We can only hope that future recoveries may be made of durable artifact offerings, such as pipes, chipped stone tools and bone or glass beads from rock painting sites, allowing the dating of both artifacts and the site. Unfortunately evidence from informants suggests that tobacco, a perishable item, may have been the most common offering. It should be emphasized that if artifactual materials are recovered by anyone, they should be returned after study to their original locations at the pictograph sites for reasons of respect.

Ethnographic Evidence

Most Indian people questioned about the age of Churchill River rock paintings state that they were made long ago. No one mentioned to me that a particular painting had been made by particular people, but Doug Evans was told that certain families now living in Pelican Narrows had painted rock paintings (personal communication May 30, 1968). We may infer that some paintings are quite recent. Another bit of information bearing on the age of Churchill River sites relates to the largest of four sets of paintings just above Medicine Rapids, about 39 km southeast of Frog Portage (see Dewdney 1963:5 for illustration). Bishop Richard Young, on a tour of the Church Missionary Society's Missions in Saskatchewan in 1897, was shown a rock painting which the oldest man in the district said had been there beyond the memory of the aged people of his youth (Young 1897). If the man was 80 years old and the old people of his youth went back perhaps 70 years before that, this set of paintings can be dated to the middle 1700s.

It is clear that rock painting traditions, perhaps some connected with Churchill River sites, continued into modern times, and that some paintings in the northwest region of the Canadian Shield rock art style are at least 200 years old. Some of the possible dating methods, coupled with increased archaeological knowledge of groups living at the time when paintings were made, will put Shield rock art dating on a much firmer footing. So far, historic and ethnographic documentation gives us the clearest specific information on the age of this art, particularly minimum dates.

Authorship of the Paintings

The available evidence suggests that the cultural groups who created rock paintings across the Canadian Shield were probably the ancestors of Algonkian-speaking groups who live in the area today. In eastern Manitoba and in Ontario these are the various Ojibwa and Algonkin subgroups, and in northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan, including the Churchill River, they are Cree-speakers. In considering authorship we are interested in two aspects: who the individual artist was, and which ethnic group/artistic tradition he or she belonged to. As might be expected, the individual artist can rarely be identified so the archaeologist is restricted to identifying the most likely cultural group. In one sense, then, Shield rock art is a body of almost anonymous art. Shield rock paintings ascribed to specific individuals have been recorded in only a few instances. Bell (1881:7c) was told that the paintings at Molson Lake, Manitoba were made by the father of a chief. The chief was still living at the time of Bell's visit. In 1969, Jack Steinbring was told by older informants at Hole River, Manitoba about paintings made by a *Midé* priest in 1905 (Steinbring 1978:12-14). Irving Hallowell recorded that one of the sons of a man who had assumed leadership at Jack Head on the western side of Lake Winnipeg was named *Manzi·napkinegewinini* ("the man who is painting the rock"), and that he thought this man might still be alive in 1936 (Hallowell 1936:47). In 1972, a man at Norway House told me that he had seen a painting in his youth on Bigstone Lake, Manitoba which was said to have been made by a man in the generation previous to his. Clint Wheeler was told around 1973 about the origin of a rock painting on the Semple River, Manitoba (Wheeler 1975:709-11). An old man named Mistoos Muskego went to a particular high cliff to obtain medicine from the *Memekwesiwak* (see *Present Significance*, below), and later painted a figure representing them.

Closer to the study area (and as noted above), Doug Evans told me that he was informed by a man living in Pelican Narrows that certain named families there were noted for making rock paintings. Since the Pelican Narrows people travelled extensively on the Churchill, some of the Churchill River sites could well have been made by them. A man in his 70s (?) told me in 1965 at Stanley that it was people long ago who made the paintings, and that the old people told him stories to the effect that the really old-timers dreamed of these things we see on the rocks, like down at Stanley Rapids, where you see something that looks like a plane. One old-timer dreamed of something that was flying, very big, up in the sky, so that's why he painted that, and he said, "A hundred years from now you'll see something flying in the sky. So it was figured that he dreamed of this, because there were no planes then." This figure is probably the one described as a "cross" in Figure 25.

According to stories the old people told my informant, those who did the paintings were just a few men who travelled all over. His grandmother told him about a man who made three paintings up the river from Stanley, below Twin Falls. This might be the Mountain Lake Peninsula site 1 paintings (Fig. 22). She said that the old fellow who painted these was

just passing through, up the Churchill, and he was alone. There were people there who watched him paint. This old fellow, after he was finished painting, told the people who were watching that the painting was only going to last as long as he lived. But we just wonder, he said, if this fellow is still living or not because the painting is still there. That was over a hundred years ago and the man was old then.

A third-hand bit of information was passed on to me about the origin of the paintings in Cow Narrows (Fig. 21). An old lady told Bob and Lois Dalby of La Ronge that long ago some people were travelling along the Churchill near Cow Narrows when they saw a cow (?) swimming across with moss on its back. The painting was made to commemorate this event (Doug Whitfield, personal communication July 31, 1968).

An important reference both to age and authorship of rock paintings in the study area is provided by Douglas Leechman et al (1955:38-39).

> The late Dr. William McInnes, of the Geological Survey of Canada, speaking of the Western Cree, said that pictographs were said to have been 'done long ago by a powerful shaman, who made them without effort simply by putting his hands on the rock, and that other Indians say that they were made by boys during the fasting period at the time of puberty and represent various animals and objects dreamed of at that time'. In either case, he continues, 'these Indians know these pictographs were made by their own ancestors and do not attribute them to a mythological period.'

By Western Cree, McInnes undoubtedly meant the Wood Cree living along the Churchill River and adjacent areas, since his rock painting records were all concerned with the Churchill River.

Both Dale Russell (personal communication November 11, 1973) and Doug Evans (personal communication May 30, 1968 and September 12, 1973) have passed on to me somewhat fragmentary details of a story from Sandy Bay which may bear on the origin of the paintings along the Churchill. One version is that the first man to travel up the Churchill River painted the pictographs above rapids at each place where they are seen today. The other is that a group of people travelling up the river stopped at places where they saw paintings on the rocks, and slept overnight there. At night they dreamt (the next part of the journey?). This was repeated a number of times until they reached their destination.

P. G. Downes, in his book *Sleeping Island*, talks about rock paintings at Medicine Rapids and at a now submerged site in Birch Narrows on Reindeer Lake, which he visited in the 1930s with Indians from Pelican Narrows. He considered the paintings to be of considerable antiquity, representing dream-figures seen by a man seeking his *puagan* or spirit-power (1943:41). According to Downes, (1943:67-68):

> . . . to the Cree mind, all the world was spirit-bearing and animistic — every tree, every animal, every insect, and even the rocks and sand and water. His life was spent in placating and observing a host of spirits. He and the world around him were a completely dual world

> of the physical and its spirit counterpart. To help in his struggle in this world of spirits, each individual possessed a very secret, personal guiding and helping spirit which he could call upon in times of stress, which often visited him in dreams, which was his and his alone. It might be the spirit-half of anything — a certain animal, a sunbeam, the rainbow, a grain of sand, an unknown human, in fact; anything in the world. This was a man's *"puagan"*. . . . To obtain and recognize his *puagan* the individual, just following his adolescence, secreted himself from his fellows for an indefinite period of fasting and intensive dreaming. It was often the custom to go off and construct a sort of nest high up in some secluded spruce tree.
>
> Gradually from the dreams, hallucinations, possibly brought on by the self-imposed starvation, one figure or one dream object would disentangle itself and become increasingly clear and dominant. When this dream object became so fixed that the neophyte could establish a rapport with it, it was recognized as the lifelong, personal "*manitou*", power, god, spirit — in short, the *puagan*.

Bishop Richard Young (1897), seeing one of the sets of paintings above Medicine Rapids, commented, "presumably the whole design represented the artist's 'powakun' or familiar spirit".

A La Ronge man who was 79 years old in 1965 said to me that the paintings are found at the place where dreams occurred to the painters, and that they represent the gods of these painters. Whenever in need of assistance, the painter could go to these places where the spirits resided. Each Indian had a personal spirit which could act as a guardian from harm caused by others' spirits. As well, a friend's spirit could intercede to protect him. One old man at Southend told me in 1965 that the *Memekwesiwak* painted the rock paintings. Further east, at Cross Lake and Norway House, this explanation was given most often regarding authorship of pictographs (Jones & Jones 1978).

Comparisons

The references to Ojibwa or Saulteaux artists (Hallowell 1936; Steinbring 1978) and to Swampy Cree artists (Bell 1881) have been included to demonstrate the overlap across central and northern regions of the Canadian Shield in the distributions of rock painting traditions and Algonkian speakers. All of the territory where Shield rock paintings are found today is occupied by Cree and Ojibwa peoples. There are only two exceptions to this: the site recorded by Dewdney near Fort Smith, which is in present Beaver Indian (Athapascan-speaking) territory, and three sites south of Lloyd Lake on the Clearwater River, Saskatchewan (Scott 1980:6-7) which is in territory occupied mostly by Chipewyan people*.

*. . . One of the Clearwater River sites is the only site reported to be of Chipewyan authorship. In 1968 a man from La Loche told me that the story about this place was that a young Chipewyan boy being pursued on water by some Crees came to a place on the river where there was a flat rock face that went straight into the water. He painted some figures on the rock and continued on. When the Crees came to the place the figures on the rock came to life, frightening them, and they fled back from where they came.

Strong supportive evidence for Algonkian authorship of the Churchill River paintings is provided by comparison with data from the central and eastern Shield, where most rock paintings are believed to be of Ojibwa origin (Dewdney & Kidd 1967). North of Lake Winnipeg we hear stories of rock paintings being associated with the ***Memekwesiwak***. Informants say that many of the paintings were meant to communicate things that would transpire in the future and that sometimes the ***Memekwesiwak*** created the paintings. People in this area did not attribute the paintings to any other group of people.

In the Churchill River area and in the rest of the northwestern Canadian Shield we find striking similarities with more easterly and southerly rock art sites. These include the general sameness of settings with paintings in groups on vertical rock faces immediately next to or readily visible from the water; similarities in some of the subject matter such as horned serpents, thunderbirds, snakes, humans, and moose; the widespread practice of leaving propitiatory offerings; association of sites with ***Memekwesiwak;*** or with shamans or others who were depicting vision symbols.

In reviewing the archaeological records for the Boreal Forest of western Quebec, northern Ontario, northern Manitoba and part of adjacent Saskatchewan, James Wright (1968b:67) found an unusual homogeneity and great cultural continuity through thousands of years which he attributed to a very harsh environment. Wright (1968a) places the Cree at Southern Indian Lake in the eastern part of the study area from at least the 10th Century A.D. onward. The recent Churchill River Study (Meyer & Smailes 1975) indicates a similar time depth for the Cree along the Saskatchewan part of the Churchill River.

Jenness (1963:424, map) assumed that in 1725 A.D. the Cree were "separated from the Chipewyans by the Churchill River, which was certainly the boundary in the middle of the century". He felt that the Cree reached their greatest territorial expansion between 1750 and 1780, moving into the west as far as the Rocky Mountains and into the north as far as the delta of the Mackenzie River. However, Beryl Gillespie (1975:350-88) has analyzed the Cree-Chipewyan boundary question and concludes that the situation is actually ***reversed***, that the Chipewyan moved south as far as the Churchill River into traditional Cree territory beginning in the 1760s. The Chipewyans reached their southernmost expansion in the 1790s (Gillespie 1975:383). Therefore, Algonkian authorship of the Churchill River paintings is given further support since age estimates of 200 years and older would place them well within the period of prehistoric Cree occupation of the area.

Function, Interpretation and Significance

The determination of the age of cultural artifacts such as the Churchill rock paintings and the identification of who created them are two of the most important problems in any archaeological study. However, a third question is of even more importance to the ethnologist, whose task is, at least in part, to comprehend, interpret and explain such cultural phenomena, bettering our understanding of all human behaviour. The question of function significance or meaning of such artifacts is extremely difficult, particularly where the society is quite different from that of the observer's or if considerable time separates the artist from his various audiences.

Many writers have suggested or assumed that rock art is directed toward magical assistance in hunting or gathering food. I propose that the form and substance of Churchill River art was conditioned not so much by attempts to increase mastery over subsistence activities (although this motivation may be seen in a few examples), as by other concerns about the social, economic and spiritual environment. The hunting magic found in some areas appears to be almost totally absent here (Pohorecky & Jones 1971:16).

From the evidence assembled so far explanations for the Churchill River pictographs fall into five broad categories: (1) individuals painted personal guardian spirit symbols seen in visions; (2) shamans made the paintings; (3) *Memekwesiwak* painted certain paintings; (4) certain paintings were made by individuals who depicted future things or events; and (5) some paintings were intended as markers for travellers. We must anticipate that these explanations are not necessarily mutually exclusive in that paintings of visions may have depicted personal guardian spirits, but they may also have been prophetic of things that were to happen in the future. We note as well that dreaming or seeking visions is commonly associated with the Churchill River paintings. The vision quest, widespread among North American Indian tribes generally, was strongly developed among the northern Algonkian tribes.

One of the characteristic qualities of Canadian Shield rock art sites is their individuality (Pohorecky & Jones 1971; Dewdney & Kidd 1967). An examination of the subject matter of the Churchill River sites shows that a number of the symbols are unique or rare. As Dewdney has already stated, it is probable that most of the Shield rock paintings represent dream symbols (Dewdney 1963:11). Such individual vision-seeking, known to be characteristic of the forest Algonkians, would encourage individuality of expression in rock paintings (see also Downes 1943:67-68, and McInnes in Leechman et al 1955:38-39). This individual quality makes understanding very difficult but we may achieve some understanding of the art and the artists by using various lines of inquiry.

It is apparent from the knowledge we do have of religious practices that Algonkians, like other North American Indians, had an involved and complex cosmology relating all things in their universe. This cosmology

was not universally understood by all the members of a society, but instead was interpreted by only certain members called priests or shamans. These specialists often acted as intermediaries between human and metaphysical spheres.

Henry Schoolcraft said that the Ojibwa possessed two types of pictography which they termed *Kekeewin*, things generally understood by the tribe, and *Kekeenowin*, or teachings of the *medas* (priests) and *jossakeeds* (prophets). According to Schoolcraft (quoted in Mallery 1893:35):

> The knowledge of the latter is chiefly confined to persons who are versed in their system of magic medicine, or their religion, and may be termed hieratic. The former consists of the common figurative signs, such as are employed at places of sepulture or by hunting or travelling parties. It is also employed in the *muzzinabiks*, or rock-writings. Many of the figures are common to both and are seen in the drawings generally; but it is to be understood that this results from the figure alphabet being precisely the same in both, while the devices or the nugamoons or medicine, wabino, hunting and war songs are known solely to the initiates who have learned them, and who always pay high to the native professors for this knowledge.

Another early worker, Colonel Garrick Mallery (1893:35) further elaborated the difficulties and requisites of interpretation in words that are still most appropriate:

> Symbolism was of individual origin and was soon variously obscured by conventionalizing; therefore it requires separate study in every region. No interpreting laws of general application to petroglyphs so far appear, although types and tendencies can be classified . . . it now seems that knowledge of the people who were the makers of the petroglyphs is necessary to any clear understanding of their work.

Keeping in mind Schoolcraft's information about Ojibwa symbolization and the practice of guarding special knowledge, we should consider the strong possibility that certain Churchill River rock paintings may have meant entirely different things to the uninitiated and to the tutored eye. Although we have no detailed interpretations for any groups of symbols along the Churchill River I feel that some interpretation is possible, since limited explanations of certain paintings have been obtained elsewhere. The few people who have systemically questioned older Indian people in Stanley, La Ronge, Southend, Pinehouse, Pelican Narrows, Sandy Bay, Pukatawagan, and South Indian Lake have found a rich residuum of knowledge about Cree history and culture still resident with some of the people. It is with these people, if anywhere, that the most meaningful interpretations of this surviving form of religious art will be found.

However, there are various levels of meaning that may be sought, even if one is not part of traditional Cree culture. For the Churchill River area, for example, we find a curious absence of moose, and a surprising

presence of several bison. Did this mean that the moose was rare and the bison was common, or the reverse, that bison were rare and moose so common as to be unworthy of note? The occurrence of smoking pipes in paintings suggests ceremonial motivations because smoking was universally regarded by North American Indians as a sacred activity. The presence of the thunderbird deity in many paintings also suggests a religious approach. Furthermore, we may surmise something about the material practices of the artist's culture when we see a hunting dog assisting a man in the chase. Conversely, the *absence* of some possible subjects in the rock art, such as men in armed conflict, probably has both meaning and significance for us when we consider what kind of a society the artists enjoyed.

Present Significance

A common tradition of Algonkian-speakers is the leaving of offerings at rock paintings and other locations such as rapids, waterfalls, high cliff faces, and caves, all of which were considered to be inhabited by spirit powers. David Thompson, the early map maker and explorer, says that the Cree regarded Manito Falls on the Black River as the residence of a god or spirit and made offerings to it. Even his Chipewyan guides who "make no offering to anything . . . were so awestruck that one gave a ring, and the other a bit of tobacco" (Hopwood 1971:137). Harmon gives the most complete explanation of the Cree practice of leaving offerings at special places:

> The Indian physicians never fail of leaving in the place where they collect the roots, herbs, &c. which they use as medicines, some trifling article, as a recompense to the guardian spirits, that preside over these substances, for what they have taken. An omission of this would, in their apprehension, destroy most, if not all the efficacy of their medicines (Lamb 1957:234).
>
> There are also certain large rocks and caves, which they never pass without leaving at them some trifling articles; for they suppose that they are the habitations of some good or evil spirits. Indeed they think that almost every lake, river and mountain has its tutelary spirit, whom they attempt to propitiate, by some offering (Lamb 1957:230).

Alexander Mackenzie gives the earliest historic evidence that the people left offerings at rock paintings at some Churchill River sites. The practice has also been observed recently at several sites in present Ojibwa territory in Ontario by Dewdney (Dewdney & Kidd 1967:44, 41, 154), by me and by others (see Conway 1979:141). I have not seen any evidence of offerings being left today at any of the Churchill River pictograph sites, but I have seen votive offerings at other places in northern Saskatchewan, including a pictograph site near the Churchill River in 1980. Dale Russell has indicated that offerings had been left at the Sturgeon Stone (recently?) which is at Pickerel Rapids between Sandy Bay and Maple Leaf Rapids on the Churchill (personal

communication November 11, 1973), and Selwyn Dewdney was told that moose horns were recently being left on the Swimming Stone in the upper Churchill as offerings (personal communication September 30, 1973).

Memekwesiwak should certainly be mentioned when discussing contemporary significance, for there are a number of stories associating them with many rock paintings across the Shield (Rogers 1962:D43; Jones & Jones 1978: 81-2; Jones 1979:84, 86-87; Dewdney & Kidd 1967:13-14; Wheeler 1975). The ***Memekwesiwak*** are a type of human being usually described as being small, often having no nose (or no cartilaginous part of the nose), possessing powerful medicine and knowledge of medicinal matters, whose homes are in rocks, water or other places. Importantly, many people say that these beings lived long ago before the Indians (that is, Cree Indians) lived here. Stories are common about Cree people obtaining medicines or being trained in medical and spiritual power by the ***Memekwesiwak*** in past times. A well-known limestone cave on the Montreal River north of Lac La Ronge was thought to be the home of some ***Memekwesiwak***, and old Indian men used to go there to obtain medicine. The practice of leaving tobacco in places where the ***Memekwesiwak*** are known to reside is widespread, and is for them to smoke.

Downes (1943:55-57) repeats a story about three of them seen in a tiny canoe near Southend many years before and I have been told a number of stories about these unusual beings, although only one informant attributed paintings in the study area to them. In passing, we might note that the pictographs of human faces found in two of the upper Churchill River sites and at the main Hickson-Maribelli Lake site do not depict noses. It can be speculated that these may have been intended as representations of ***Memekwesiwak***.

These examples give some idea of the strength of this aspect of traditional Cree religious observation relating to rock paintings. The true extent of contemporary religious observation at rock art sites is unknown, because much of the traditional Cree religion went underground in order to survive Christianizing impulses and other forces destructive to Cree culture, and remains largely secretive, even today.

Conclusions

This study has pointed to the Cree authorship of the rock paintings of the Churchill River, to the likelihood that pictographs on rocks have existed for at least several centuries in the area, and to the religious motivation of people in making the paintings. Most information from native informants and from observations recorded by non-Indians relating to the art of the area strongly supports the idea that paintings depict visions by shamans and others seeking or obtaining spiritual power. Functional analyses and attempts at interpretation of the rock art of the whole Canadian Shield must be undertaken on a wider basis than heretofore, as already stated by Steinbring and Elias (1967:3-8). From a technical point of view there must be more information on specific pictograph sites and symbols if comparative studies of any significance are to proceed. It is absolutely essential that accurate data be published if such studies are to have validity.

To date only three detailed published site reports of Canadian Shield pictograph sites are readily available to other researchers. The first (Pohorecky & Jones 1967b) deals with the four sites on Kipahigan Lake, describing each group of paintings and their settings and geographical relationships to regional water-routes, and discussing possible relationships with other rock paintings in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The second study (Steinbring et al 1978) gives detailed descriptions of the paintings and settings at the Opachuanau Lake sites in Manitoba. The third publication (Rajnovich 1980) describes and analyzes a panel at Cuttle Lake Large site in northwestern Ontario. Similar detailed records of other Shield sites are needed to help in making better analytical comparisons.

For the Churchill River region there are very few motifs at rock art sites that can definitely be tied to the historic period, suggesting that most were done prior to European contact, or that European influence on the art was minimal after contact. Comparisons with other Shield areas reveal that several documented occurrences of pictographs are at least 150 to 250 years old. There are presently no suitable techniques for determining the outer time limits of this complex of traditions, and we must await possible breakthroughs in one or more of the physical dating methods. Chronological studies of Shield pictography must await some of the results of more archaeological excavation in this northwestern area. Demographic movements of prehistoric Shield peoples are not sufficiently known to suggest patterns in the dispersal of rock painting traditions, or when such diffusions may have occurred. Archaeological studies may reveal evidence of such changes coming from the east, since it is in the Shield country of northwestern Ontario where we encounter the greatest concentration of pictograph sites.

Kenneth Kidd, speaking at the Second National Conference of the Canadian Rock Art Research Associates in Saskatoon, December 4th, 1971, said, "We are still in the recording stage — analysis will come later". While an attempt has been made in this study to go beyond the stage of assembling physical field data pertaining to the Churchill River

pictographs, it is certain that Kidd was at least partly right. Attempts at analyzing pictography from a position outside the perceptual and cognitive frameworks in which the symbols were made must be done with caution.

One specific example may illustrate this. The syllabic inscription painted on Wamninuta Island was tentatively translated from the Cree as "far" in English. The man positioned next to these figures is painted in the same colour, and these symbols obviously form a group. The man is shown as walking or in motion, and a line projects from his head (Fig. 8). Two interpretations could be made; first, that the artist had gone some distance on the river and recorded the fact of his journey; or, second, that the symbols illustrate a shaman's spirit journey in which his personal spirit-power had left his body and travelled far, perhaps to battle with a malevolent person or other being. The "Kilroy was here" motivation for making a painting is quite different than that of a shaman engaging in a life-and-death struggle. Each "interpretation" must therefore be carefully considered, and based on solid corroborative evidence.

It has been indicated that a body of knowledge concerning native religion is possessed by some Indian people. Such knowledge should be recorded, and remaining pictograph sites found in the hinterlands of the Canadian Shield should be located and recorded, as well. Combining the information from the oral traditions with technical information obtained in other ways — through motif distribution studies, evidence of artifactual change in the archaeological record, and dating of paintings through physical means — we may learn more about the chronological, ecological and inter-societal relationships of peoples living throughout the northern forests. We will also learn something more of their spiritual relationship to their environment as they proceeded through time and space.

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I hope, as do many of the people who have assisted in this study, that increased knowledge of this aspect of the collective heritage of both Indians and Non-Indians will further demonstrate the basic unity of all peoples. This work is meant to be an appreciation of the now-unknown creators, whose art we are fortunate enough to have inherited.

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Appendix I

Climate, Flora, and Fauna of the Churchill River Area

Climate

The climate of the Churchill River study area is, according to the Churchill River Basin Task Force Report (1972:6), "typical of continental taiga with long cold winters, low precipitation and short cool summers". There are less than four months over 10°C mean temperature, the frost-free period is less than 80 days, and freezing may be expected even in the warmest month of the year (Chakravarti 1969:60). The mean annual precipitation for the Basin is about 45 cm per annum, of which about one-third is snow (Churchill River Basin Task Force 1972:6). "All lakes and most rivers of the Shield freeze over the winter. The length of the frozen period increases from south to north, being three or four months in the southern Shield and seven or eight months in the northern part" (Robinson 1969:67). Break-up and melting of the ice usually is completed by the third week in May, and freeze-up usually occurs by about mid-November.

Flora

The study area lies within the Northern Coniferous Section of the Boreal Forest Region which has been characterized by Rowe (1959:26):

> On the southwestern part of the Precambrian Shield, from western Ontario to western Saskatchewan, is a section where climatic conditions allow reasonable tree growth and the development of closed forests wherever depth of soils is adequate. It is bounded on the north by the subarctic open forest . . . Black spruce (*Picea mariana*) is the predominant tree, forming stands on the thin soils of the uplands as well as on the poorly drained lowlands, and associated on these two positions with jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) and tamarack (*Larix laricina*), respectively. Frequent fires have favoured the spread of jack pine and are probably responsible also for the general though scattered representation of white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) over the majority of sites. In river valleys, around some of the lakes and on south-facing slopes, where more favourable conditions of soil and local climate obtain, white spruce (*Picea glauca*), balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and balsam poplar (P. *balsamifera*) form mixed stands of good growth. . . The deeper drift of slopes and valleys shows podzol profile development, while the less well-drained areas are peat-filled.

The "closed forest" character of the boreal forest is familiar to travellers in the bush or on the Churchill River, and is perhaps the most striking feature of the landscape, along with the abundance of surficial water. "Getting bushed", a well-known northern phrase, is a distinctive and apt metaphor for depression sometimes induced by the sameness of expanses of trees, rocks and water.

As well as the large tree types mentioned, there is a range of environmental niches occupied by under-story plants according to

individual soil, moisture and light preferences. A great number of perennial and annual woody and herb plants grow in the area (see Heilman-Ternier & Harms 1975), and these often played a major part in the food economy of the aboriginal peoples. Plants were used not only for food, but for a great variety of medicinal purposes. Downes (1943:45) took note of one spot on the north bank of the Churchill River, probably on Uskik Lake, where "the old Indians years ago were accustomed to resort to gather certain herbs and roots for their medicine bags."

Fauna

A general characteristic of areas in the high latitudes of continents is an abundance of individuals of faunal and floral species concomitant with the presence of few species, in contrast to low latitude areas where there are great numbers of species but relatively fewer individuals of each (Maher 1969:82). The Churchill River area presents a situation somewhat intermediate between high and low latitude areas — there are relatively many species, as well as moderate numbers of each.

The severe winter temperatures of the Shield have resulted in the most successful adaptations to the Shield environment being made by various fur-bearing animals. Of approximately 43 species of mammals that presently inhabit the boreal forest of the Shield in northern Saskatchewan (Maher 1969:82) the following rodents are included: various species of mice, voles, lemmings, squirrels, woodchuk (*Marmota monax*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*), muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), and porcupine, (*Erethizon dorsatum*). Carnivores are represented by marten (*Martes americana*), fisher (*Martes pennanti*), Least weasel (*Mustela rixosa*), ermine (*Mustela erminea*), mink (*Mustela vison*), black bear (*Ursus americanus*), lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), wolverine (*Gulo luscus*), timber or gray wolf (*Canis lupus*), otter (*Lutra canadensis*) and red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) (Moon 1970:124, 152; Maher 1969:80-82). The snowshoe rabbit or varying hare (*Lepus americanus*) is found throughout the area.

Rogers (1962), Jenness (1963), Mason (1967), and others have delineated the far-reaching importance of fur-bearers to the Indians inhabitating the Canadian Shield subarctic woodlands region, and numerous writers have documented the inter-relationships between the Indians, European traders and the animals themselves (e.g. Innis 1970; Rich 1967; etc.) during the fur trade era in Canada. Animals other than those used in fur trade were also very important to the native peoples of the Shield — most notably, the moose (*Alces alces*), woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus sylvestris*), and wapiti or elk (*Cervus canadensis*).

The white-tailed deer (*Dama virginianus*) occurs sporadically in the area today (and may have also in the past), and elk formerly ranged as far north as Reindeer Lake. Historically, large herds of barren ground caribou (*Rangifer tarandus arcticus*) are known to have come into the northeastern part of the study area, as far south as Reindeer Lake and

the middle of Southern Indian Lake (McInnes 1913:7). The grizzly bear (*Ursus horribilis*) formerly was present throughout the province, and the buffalo or bison (*Bison* sp.) formerly ranged as far north as Lac La Ronge and Pinehouse Lake, just on the southern and western edge of the study area (Maher 1969:81). There is no present evidence that the plains or wood bison subspecies reached the Churchill River in the same area as the rock painting occurrences, but this is entirely possible. It is also likely that cougar *(Felis concolor)* occupied at least part of the area, although they occur only rarely today on the southern edge of the boreal forest area of western Saskatchewan, and possibly in southeastern Manitoba.

Virtually all of the animals mentioned above were used as food and other parts of the bodies were used for clothing, tools, and other technological items by the Indians of the Shield. Birds and fish of various species also played significant roles in the diet and technology of the Indians. Numerous species of fish occur in the Churchill River. Some of the major ones known to be utilized are the northern pike or jackfish (*Esox lucius*), burbot or maria (*Lota lota),* various species of "suckers" (family Catastomidae), whitefish and tullibees (family Coregonidae), perch (*Perca flavescens*), pickerel (*Stizostedion vitreum*), and sturgeon (*Acipenser flavescens*) (Symington 1963).

Of the "game" birds that presently breed or migrate throughout Saskatchewan, the following species are found in the study area or major parts of it: mallard, pintail, lesser scaup, white-winged scoter, green-winged teal, baldpate, American coot, gadwall, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, shoveler, blue-winged teal, Canada goose, bufflehead, common snipe, spruce grouse, red-breasted merganser, common merganser, sandhill crane, common goldeneye, ring-necked duck, snow goose, oldsquaw, black duck, and willow ptarmigan (Gollop 1969:85-88, 90). Other bird species not listed, such as whooping crane and some shore and song birds, were undoubtedly eaten as well.

Finally, only one species of snake, the red-sided garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis parietalis*) is found in the study area, approximately in the area west of the mouth of the Reindeer River (Atton 1969:83; Cook 1966:28).

Of these animals and plants, it is interesting to note that no plants, and only a few animals can be clearly identified in the aboriginal rock paintings of the area: moose, bison and beaver. Other animals which likely appear in some of the paintings (but cannot be identified with certainty) are bear, elk and caribou. A number of birds are found, but it is not clear if they are ordinary birds or the mythical Thunderbird. Snakes seen in several northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba rock painting sites are thought to be mythical serpents.

Appendix II

Review of Literature Relevant to Churchill River Rock Art

Pohorecky and Jones (1968) present a detailed description of the physical circumstances at the Silent Rapids site, and a discussion of the possible age of the site, relating it to a rock painting seen by Alexander Mackenzie near Silent Rapids in the late 18th century. Brief mentions of other sites are made by: Alexander Mackenzie (1927:83, 84) concerning paintings on Sandfly Lake and near Silent Rapids; W. J. Wintemberg (1939) quoting a traveller who saw either a pictograph or a petroglyph site between Souris River Outpost and Stanley Mission; Olson (1961) noting a set of paintings on Black Bear Island Lake and another on Snake (now Pinehouse) Lake; Pohorecky and Jones (1967b:32) making a brief comparison between a figure on Kipahigan Lake and one at Maple Leaf Rapids on the Churchill; Pohorecky (1970a:107) commenting on the historical significance of Mackenzie's earlier observation of the Silent Rapids site; Pohorecky (1970b:33) noting Mackenzie's reference to a painting on a bear-shaped rock on Sandfly Lake; Dickson (1972:58, 72) providing the geographical co-ordinates of each of the Opachuanau Lake sites, and a brief description of the symbols at each site; Jones (1974) discussing sites potentially affected by hydro-electric development, and illustrating the paintings at the Conjuring River Mouth site and one figure from the Island Portage site; Mondor (1973) generally discussing the Churchill River sites and giving photographs of the Stanley Rapids and Silent Rapids sites (the first mis-labelled as Silent Rapids, and printed upside-down); and the Churchill River Study (1976:129: photos on 57), briefly generalizing on sites in the hydro impact area, and discussing the Conjuring River Mouth site paintings.

Illustrations of symbols found at Churchill River sites are published in seven other sources. McInnes (Smith 1923:107, figs. 2-4) made three sketches of sets of paintings at Grave (now Stanley) Rapids, at the Wasawakasik Lake site, and at the Maple Leaf Rapids site. Dewdney (1963:8-9, 7, 10) published a drawing of the Cow Narrows paintings and a brief description of these (along with short reference to several other Churchill River sites). Campbell Grant illustrates one symbol from the Rattler Creek site, the Cow Narrows paintings (based on Dewdney's drawing), and a map of sites in the Canadian Shield done by Dewdney (Grant 1967:145, 147, 146). Pohorecky (1970b:19) has a photograph of the cliff and paintings at the Silent Rapids site and a reproduction of the paintings. Dewdney figures a small thunderbird from the Wasawakasik Lake site on page 21 of Dewdney and Kidd (1967). Pohorecky and Jones (1971: cover) show a pictograph of a human from High Rock Narrows site 2 on Black Bear Island Lake. Cotterill and Myers (1976:6) have a closeup photograph of the "insect" figure at the Stanley Rapids site.

Finally, five of the twenty-two known sites have had no information published about them other than the fact that a site existed on a certain stretch of the river. Four of these — one near Island Portage, one near Chepakan Bay on Mountain Lake, and two on Uskik Lake — were mentioned in the Sixth Annual Report of the Institute for Northern Studies

(1966:12). The Wintego Rapids site is mentioned in Meyer & Smailes (1975:17, 51). The Kinosaskaw Lake, Foster River Mouth, Wamninuta Island and High Rock Narrows sites have not previously been noted in any published form.

It would be safe to say, on examination of the descriptive and analytic extent of this material, that there is a paucity of literature useful for comparative studies for this rock art region.

Unpublished Sources:

The most important unpublished source of information on a number of the Churchill River sites is the site records made by Selwyn Dewdney in 1962, 1963, and 1964, and deposited in the Royal Ontario Museum. Of the twenty sites on the river recorded by myself, Dewdney had previously recorded twelve:

Foster River Mouth (Dewdney's #175)
Silent Rapids (D.-#176)
Wamninuta Island (D.-#177)
High Rock Narrows site 1 (D.-#178)
High Rock Narrows site 2 (D.-#179)
Rattler Creek (D.-#173)
Mountain Lake Peninsula site 1 (D.-#113)
Mountain Lake Peninsula site 2 (D.-#113)
Stanley Rapids (D.-#180)
Wasawakasik Lake (D.-#200)
Maple Leaf Rapids (D.-#199)

The Royal Ontario Museum records include reproductions of the symbols, map locations, position of paintings relative to water level, and other notes and observations.

A paper by Steinbring et al (1978) presents a detailed description of the symbols and physical settings of the three sites on Opachuanau Lake, Manitoba as well as a number of technical observations made at each site. The paper contains a map showing the site locations, and line drawings of each of the symbols.

To the writer's knowledge, this is the sum total of documented knowledge of rock painting sites on the Churchill River until the present study, excluding, of course, that possessed by knowledgeable Indian people of this region. It is certain that the major part of the ethnohistorical information pertaining to rock art traditions lies with such people, and is yet to be recorded.

Appendix III

Additional Notes for Table 2

a. Either a horned serpent with large head and small body, or a diving bird (such as a cormorant) with an elongated neck.
b. Two curved upright marks with four short marks above (something to do with the canoe, such as fish trap, barrier in river, etc.?).
c. Two figures that could be tailed quadrupeds such as a salamander, or small mammal or stylized tailed (or phallic) humans.
d. Solidly-coloured square outlined by another.

   Small circle and arc on an upright line (representing a stylized human with upraised arms?).

   Line with three upright extensions (stylized head, shoulders and arms of human?).
e. Line down the centre of the body cavity.
f. Curved lines; head of an animal with rays or comet; remnants of a human face with a ribbed neck?; "tally marks", curved lines, line with diagonal lines attached, line with short line at each end; line with two upright extensions above a human face; cross drawn inside a circle.
g. Swimming or flying creature.
h. One human with hair or feathers (?); one with ears.
i. Four-legged creature shown in side profile; four-legged, tailed creature shown from above; insect?; a four-legged stick figure or geometric abstraction.
j. A complex of curved and straight intersecting lines.
k. Lines connecting a man to a bison.
l. Curved mark below small oval; dots and curved marks.
m. Two "tally marks".
n. Complex geometric structure below "half-man"; four "tally marks"; arc above thunderbird and snakes; object or creature (?) to the right of a stylized human and tally marks.
o. Possible insect (or plant?).
p. This serpent appears to have horns.
q. A tailed four-legged creature suckling (?) on bison.
r. Unidentified, faded curved lines.
s. Stylized bear?; turtle?; stylized thunderbird with dot inside circular body; stick animal with line extending through back inside oval enclosure.
t. Club (?) or bag held by large thunderbird.
u. Horizontal line with a "fringe" on the bottom (possibly horned serpent?); ellipsoid line extending over "bear" (representing shaking-tent structure?); figure possibly formed by cleaning paint applicator on rock.
v. Human body with a cone-shaped face.
w. Possibly a horned snake in profile.
x. Face with eyes and mouth, ears, and neck with bars.
y. Partial animal — possibly another cervid.

z. May be a very faded human figure.
AA. Probable mammal — cervid?
BB. Trident-like figure.
CC. Short curved mark.

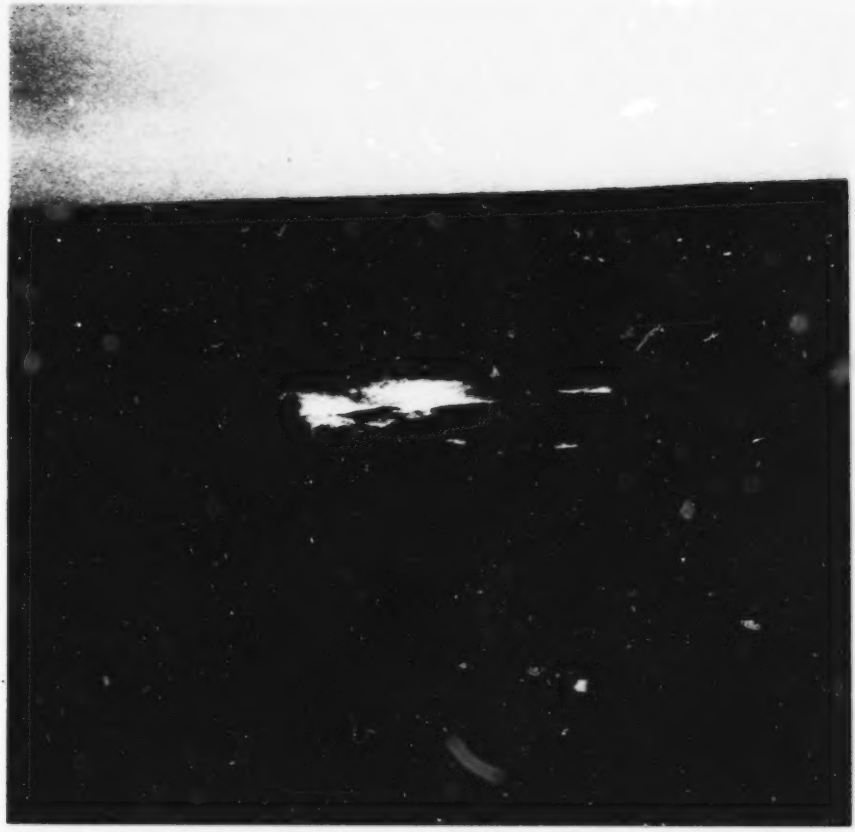

Plate 1. Kettle Falls at Uskik Lake on the Churchill River. Note that the river is a succession of quiet lakes connected by rapids. The landscape is comprised of crystalline bedrock, a thin covering of soil, and a cloak of Boreal Forest. Saskatchewan Government photograph.

Plate 2. Narrows of the Churchill River at "High Rock" a 23 meter-high exposure of Precambrian granite on Black Bear Island Lake. Pictographs are found on the rock faces next to the water in the centre of the photograph, and up the cliff face in the trees in the right centre. Looking northwest.

Plate 3. Dick Hansen (centre) and his fishing crew on Sandfly Lake, Churchill River, 1967. Several Churchill River pictograph site locations were given to the author by Mr. Hansen and by Louis Misponas (dark shirt, to right of Mr. Hansen).

Plate 4. The author tracing pictographs on Gow Lake, 32 km north of the Churchill River, using transparent overlay held by masking tape, and a felt marking pen.

Plate 5. Photographing the pictographs at Mountain Lake Peninsula site 2. Mountain Lake Peninsula site 1 is located on the rocky point on the right side of the photograph. Looking north.

Plate 6. The Kinosaskaw Lake site. The painted rock face is immediately left of Noel Dyck's head. Looking southwest.

Plate 7. The Foster River Mouth site. The light-coloured triangular rock face left and above Noel Dyck's head contains the paintings. Looking southwest.

Plate 8. The Silent Rapids site. The main painting is in the right of the photograph immediately above the stone on the ledge ahead of the canoe.

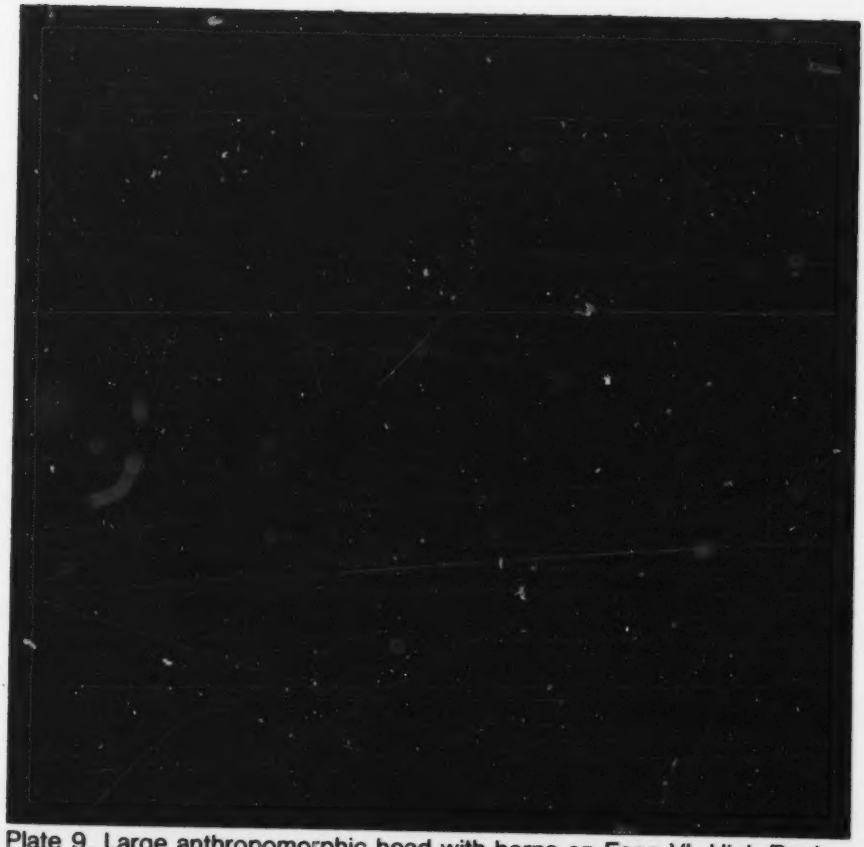

Plate 9. Large anthropomorphic head with horns on Face VI, High Rock Narrows site 2.

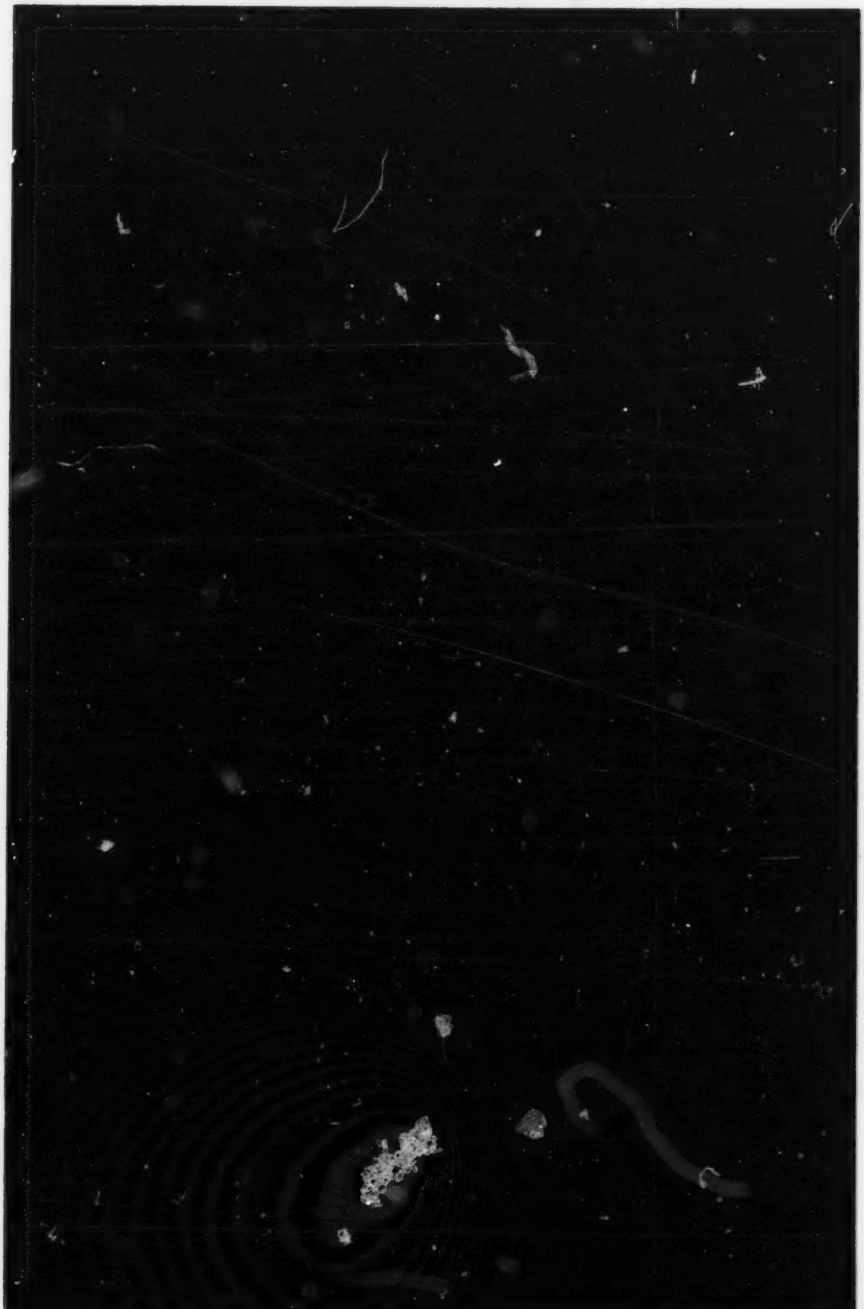

Plate 10. Human, bird and animal figures on Face VII, High Rock Narrows site 2.

Plate 11. Painting of beaver in brown-red ochre on Face I, Rattler Creek site.

Plate 12. The Rattler Creek site. Faces I and II are under the sloping flat surface on the left side of the cliffs, and Face III is the triangular surface just right of the overhang. Face IV is located at the right end of the outcrop. Looking northwest.

Plate 13. The Cow Narrows site. The figures are being traced by placing a transparent overlay, fastened on the edges with masking tape, over the figures, then tracing them with a felt marking pen.

Plate 14. Paintings at Mountain Lake Peninsula site 1. The most visible is the central stick figure of an unidentifiable animal.

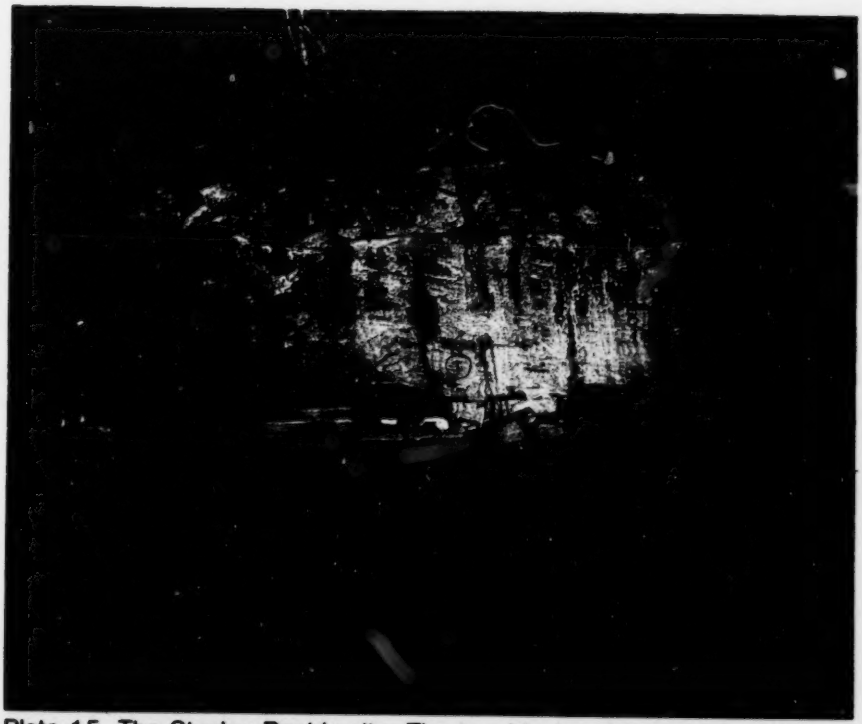

Plate 15. The Stanley Rapids site. The two blocks of outcrop containing the paintings are in the centre of the photograph, right of Wayne Morris. Tracing overlays have been placed over the paintings, and the traced dancing man in a circle on Face III may be plainly seen. Looking north-west.

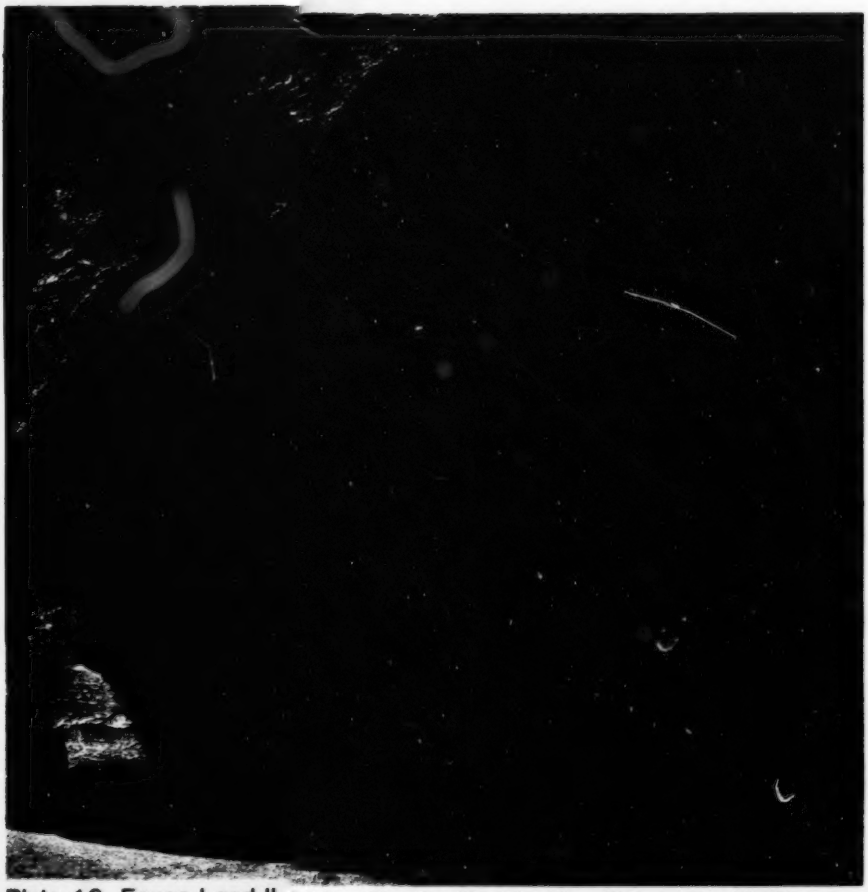

Plate 16. Faces I and II of the Stanley Rapids site. Compare with Figure 25.

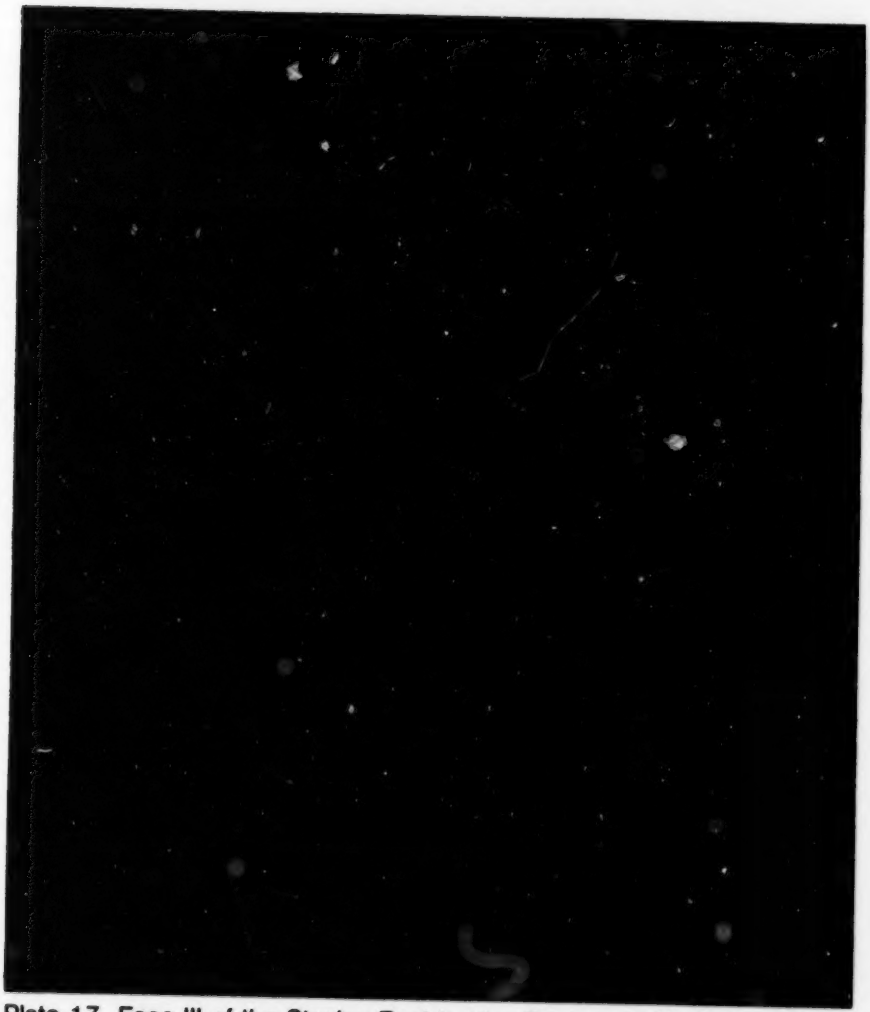

Plate 17. Face III of the Stanley Rapids site. Compare with Figure 26.

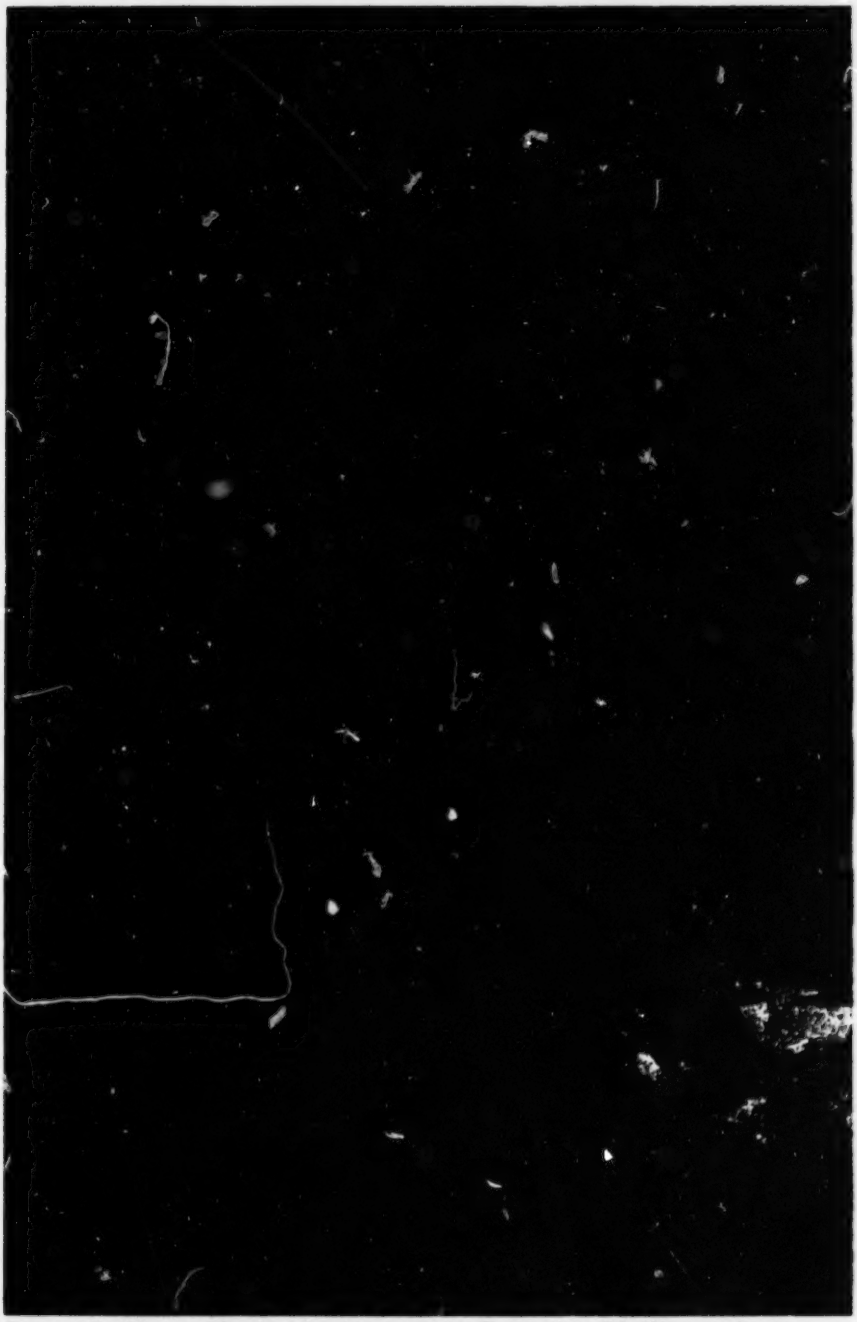

Plate 18. Wayne Morris standing next to Faces I to IV, Wasawakasik Lake site. The dominant figure is a large thunderbird, on Face I.

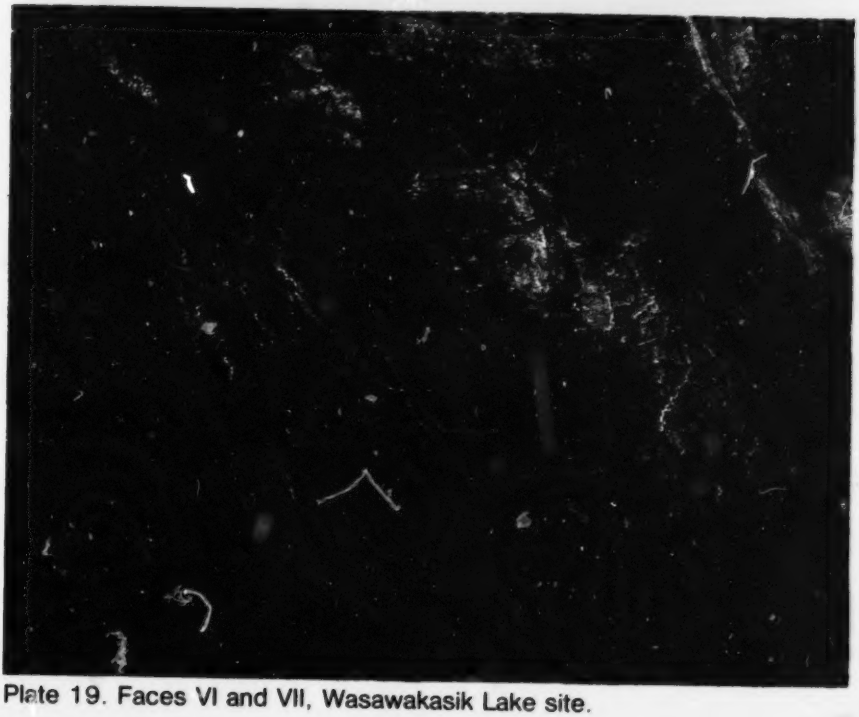

Plate 19. Faces VI and VII, Wasawakasik Lake site.

Plate 20. Paintings at the Face site. Opachuanau Lake, Manitoba. A central human face and neck is flanked by two small birds, and a pipe is located below the right bird.

Plate 21. Close view of the Caribou Nest site paintings. Compare with Figure 41.

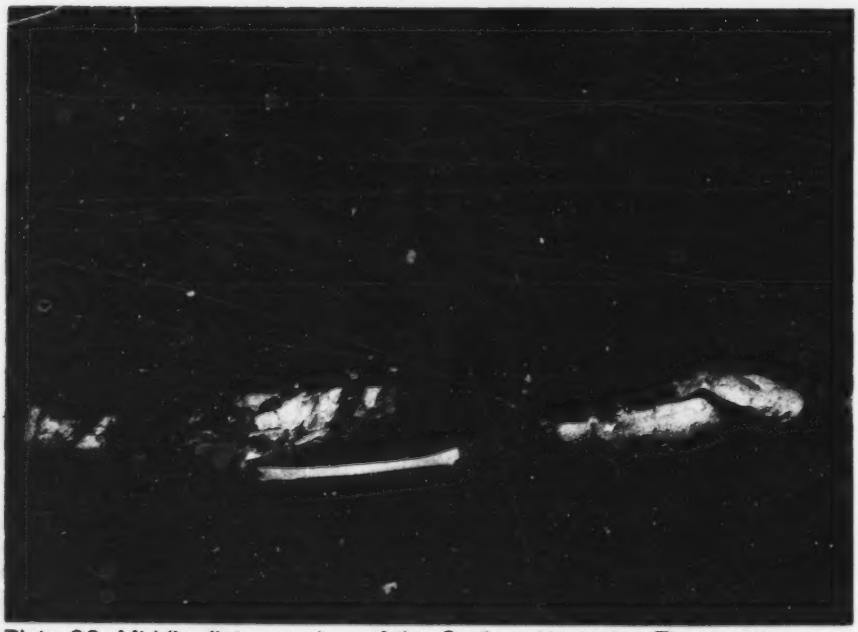

Plate 22. Middle-distance view of the Caribou Nest site. The paintings are immediately left of the standing people.